Hafa Adai!

Plans for renewable energy in CNMI gains more steam. PAGE 2

Over $28M allotted for Pacific for water infrastructure upgrades. PAGE 7

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 40

www.saipantribune.com | MONDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2023 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

MSA: Make public's voice be heard

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Stewart

Marianas Southern Airways is appealing to the community to let the administration know whether they are interested in the continuance of its air service or not.

See MSA on Page 4

What's in the MSA contract?

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

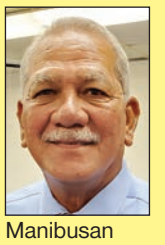
Acting Division of Procurement Services director Francisco C. Aguon had certified that the $8-million sole-source contract between the Department of Finance with the startup interisland airline, Marianas Southern Airways, is in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, and that the contract does not waste or abuse public funds.

A copy of the Contract for Purchase of Service-Airline Incentive Agreement obtained by *Saipan Tribune* Friday showed that Aguon also

See CONTRACT on Page 4

- Procurement's Aguon certifies that $8M sole-source contract does not waste, abuse public funds;
- Manibusan approved the sole-source contract;
- Torres' legal counsel Birnbrich informed AG that concerns about the contract were addressed;
- Then-Finance secretary Atalig requested for sole-source contract

Atalig


Manibusan

Birnbrich

Aguon

Thousands of ducks floated in 'Race for Cancer'

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The return of the Pacific Islands Club Saipan Duck Race for Cancer saw over 2,300 plastic ducks racing to the end of the Lazy River last Friday evening, with Rocelle Tenorio winning $2,023 after her rub-

See DUCKS on Page 4

LEIGH GASES

The ducks that came in first in the Pacific Islands Club Duck Race for Cancer last Friday night, from right, Rocelle Tenorio's duck, followed by Jasmin Ngirmekur's duck, then Ha'ani Diaz's duck for third place, and Alex Domingo's duck in fourth place.

United: We provide resident fares

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

United Airlines has clarified that it provides a different fare rate for CNMI and Guam residents and it can be accessed simply by changing one's location on the airline's website, www.united.com.

Last week, CNMI residents raised concerns about the recent increase in United Air-

See UNITED on Page 4

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Days until 'touchback rule' takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

215

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang are joined by members of the CNMI Strategic Energy Task Force during a virtual meeting last Friday with officials of the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs and National Renewable Energy Laboratory on moving forward with renewable energy in the CNMI. ***Story on Page 2***

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Ranch BBQ Bar is not your garden variety barbecue. It serves Northeast China-style barbecue.
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HEALTH & WELLNESS
Just what is hospice care and how it can provide comfort for people who are nearing the end of life?
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LIFE & STYLE
Penguin Random House said it will publish "classic" unexpurgated versions of Roald Dahl's novels.
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Local

Plans for renewable energy in CNMI gains more steam

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang, joined by members of the CNMI Strategic Energy Task Force and U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs field representative Harry C. Blanco, virtually met with DOI OIA director of Policy Basil C. Ottley, National Renewable Energy Laboratory senior project leader Philip Voss, and NREL Clean Energy Policy & Island Sustainability project leader Erik Ness on moving forward with renewable energy in the CNMI.

Palacios, Apatang, and the administration expressed their full support for the upcoming renewable energy projects underway in the Commonwealth as the NREL will be providing technical assistance, stakeholder outreach, and baseline energy and infrastructure assessment in the CNMI's renewable energy projects under DOI and U.S Department of Energy.

The meeting also discussed potential grant funding for future infrastructure and energy projects in the CNMI as well as Energy Security Plans.

The NREL is a national laboratory of the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy operated by the Alliance of Sustainable Energy that advances the science and engineering of energy efficiency, sustainable transportation, and renewable power technologies and provides the knowledge to integrate and optimize energy systems in the United States.

The members of the CNMI Strategic Energy Task Force that were present included Commonwealth Utilities Corp. acting executive director Dallas M. Peavey Jr., Infrastructure and Recovery Program acting coordinator Mariano R. Iglecias, acting director of the Office of Planning and Development Christopher A. Concepcion, director of the CNMI Energy Division Thelma B. Inos; Rep. Vincent S. Aldan, chairman of the House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications; Rep. Marissa Flores, CUC electrical engineer Adrian M. Reyes, Capital Improvement Project administrator Elizabeth Balajadia, CNMI State Energy Program Energy Division program manager Vincent S. Attao, and Office of Grants Management representatives Frankie B. Angel and Thomasa P. Mendiola. ***(PR)***

Saipan Computer Services donates $6K to NMC Foundation

As part of its commitment to higher education in the CNMI, Saipan Computer Services has donated $6,000 to the Northern Marianas College Foundation in support of its upcoming Golf Open on March 18 and 19, 2023.

"It has and will always be a privilege to contribute and further brighten this beacon of light in the CNMI, called the Northern Marianas College," Saipan Computer Services general manager Jerry Tiu said. "May your efforts bear the fruits of more upcoming stars and leaders for our community. The success of the NMC will translate to the success of the CNMI. Cheers and good luck!"

For the first time, NMC's tournament will be a two-day event and will be held on March 18 and 19, 2023, on the east and west courses of the LaoLao Bay Golf and Resort. The tournament fee for the 2023 golf open is $250. First place winners in the Men's Championship, A, B, C, Senior, and Ladies Flights will each receive $500. Second place finishers will receive $300 and third place finishers will receive $200.

"We are honored to have such passionate supporters of our students and the college," NMC Foundation chairperson Ben Babauta said. "The foundation and I extend our heartfelt thanks to Saipan Computer Services for their support."

This year's tournament will feature thousands of dollars in amazing hole-in-one prizes, such as a $10,000 shopping spree at Top Shelf Wine and Spirits, $10,000 from Ambyth Shipping and Seafix Inc., $5,000 from Pacifica Insurance, $5,000 from McDonald's of Saipan, a YETI cooler from Boarderline, and vehicles from Atkins Kroll Saipan, Triple J Motors, and Joeten Motors.

Saipan Computer Services donates $6,000 to the Northern Marianas College Foundation, in support of its upcoming golf tournament on March 18 and 19, 2023.

NMC

The tournament, which is the signature event of the NMC Foundation, aims to raise funds for the college for its rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. After the devastation and destruction of Super Typhoon Soudelor and Yutu, the college has been aggressively seeking funds from all available sources to rebuild classrooms, offices, labs, and workforce spaces for the CNMI community. The foundation is seeking the CNMI private sector's support through fundraising events like the golf tournament.

Interested companies and individuals who would like to help the college with its rebuilding efforts can donate educational tax credit, cash, or in-kind contributions by visiting www.marianas.edu/golf or by contacting NMC Foundation coordinator Carla Sablan at carla.sablan@marianas.edu or (670) 237-6780.

Golfers who would like to register for the upcoming tournament can also visit www.marianas.edu/golf. Only online payments are accepted for this upcoming golf open.

For more updates, follow NMC on Facebook and Instagram (nmc.proa) or visit www.marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

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Tanapag roadside flooding gets some attention

Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) met with officials of the CNMI Department of Public Works' Technical Services Division and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. last Friday, Feb. 24, 2023, to discuss concerns over the roadside flooding along Route 30 in Tanapag, adjacent to the location of Pacific Marine and Industrial Corp. This area of Route 30 is a known road hazard to those living in the northern villages of Saipan and especially during periods of inclement weather.

"Just last week as I was driving to the north, this small stretch of road along the main thoroughfare was coned off because of the safety of motorists. This area has become not only a health hazard due to stagnant water, but also a motorist hazard," said Babauta.

According to DPW's staff, the persistent flooding in this area is known to occur even during the dry summer months. CUC's staff were on-site to conduct a field water-chlorine test and determined that the source of the pooling water was not from a leak in CUC's water supply. Rather, it was determined that the cause of the flooding is from a naturally-occurring water spring located just north of the flood zone, which sits at a grade above the road level, causing the pooling of water along this stretch of road.

"My office will be coordinating with DPW's engineers and staff to develop a flood mitigation plan for this area and work toward a permanent solution this safety hazard along Route 30," said Babauta. ***(PR)***

Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), center, talks with officials of the CNMI Department of Public Works' Technical Services Division and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2023, over the roadside flooding along Route 30 in Tanapag.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Gas prices down 10 cents

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Following a 20-cent increase just three weeks ago, the CNMI was given a nice surprise in the form to a 10-cent reduction in prices over the weekend.

Local oil companies like Mobil Oil Marianas and Shell Marianas now charge $5.21 per gallon of regular fuel, from $5.31. Meanwhile Supreme fuel has gone down from $5.76 per gallon while diesel dropped from $6.18 per gallon to $5.88.

According to local motorists, they were gladly surprised as a reduction in prices is always better nothing.

An 18-year-old female who just recently started driving said she was so happy to pull up to the pump to see that fuel prices had gone down. "I don't use the car often but when I do, I have to gas it and it can be pricey, especially since I just started my part-time job. But I was so happy to see the gas went down again, that's a few cents less for gas," she said.

Another motorist, a 49-year-old mother of three, said she's always happy to see gas price rollbacks. "It may seem like a few cents to some, but I always welcome fuel rollbacks because I have to drop and pick up my kids everywhere. It makes a great difference for me," she said.

A 52-year-old motorist humorously said his wallet is "a little happier now." "I drive a truck and sometimes I don't even want to go out because of gas prices. When I hear that gas went down again, I always think 'my wallet is going to be a little happier' because I can save a few cents," he said.

CONTRACT

From Page 1

stated on March 10, 2022, that he believes the contract is for a public purpose and the contractor, Marianas Pacific Express LLC, is a responsible contractor.

A copy of the contract and other documents obtained by *Saipan Tribune* showed how then-Finance secretary David DLG Atalig started the request for the sole-source contract, up to the point when acting Finance secretary Tracy B. Norita issued a letter notifying MSA that the government would be terminating the contract due to lack of funding.

■■■

Based on the documents, it showed that Atalig had certified on March 10, 2022, that the funds for the $8 million are available and have been committed for funding of this contract. He also declared that he has complied with the Commonwealth procurement regulations.

On that same day, March 10, Atalig wrote Aguon, requesting approval to execute the sole-source contract with Marianas Pacific Express LLC.

Atalig said Marianas Pacific Express LLC is to operate regular flights at set rates between the islands of the CNMI, as well as between the CNMI and Guam. He said Marianas Pacific Express LLC, doing business as MSA, is a joint venture affiliated with Southern Airways, a reputable U.S.-based airline consisting of 39 flight destinations, 222 daily departures, and 35 aircrafts total. Atalig said Southern Airways' many flights focus on interisland commuter air-travel including interisland flights between the Hawaiian islands. He said Southern Airways is also an interline partners with three major airlines: United, American, and Alaska Airlines.

Atalig said a section of the Procurement Regulations permits an agency to procure services without using full and open competition such as a sole-source procurement. He said sole-source is allowed, among other criteria, where officials with expenditure authority, before executing the contract, shall justify to the Procurement and Supply director in writing about the need for contracting, the purpose of the contract, and how the expected outcome would help the agency achieve its objectives.

Atalig said the proposed contract with Marianas Pacific Express LLC satisfies each of the criteria for sole-source procurement.

He said that only one airline, STAR Marianas Air, provides commercial passenger flight travel between Saipan, Rota, and Tinian on a regular basis. Atalig said only one airline, United Airlines, provides commercial passenger flight travel between the CNMI and Guam.

He said that, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CNMI's economy, which is solely reliant on international travel and tourism, has halted and commercial activities on all three islands have been detrimentally impacted.

Atalig said this new means of air-transportation will allow tourists and potential visitors a secondary accommodation option and additional flight schedules for travel into Saipan transiting from Guam.

He added that because there is a lack of flight availability into Rota and Tinian, it is costly and inconvenient for tourists to visit these two islands.

Response to legal comments

On March 16, 2022, Gilbert Birnbrich, then-legal counsel to then-governor Ralph DLG Torres, wrote Attorney General Edward Manibusan to assist Finance in facilitating the completion of the proposed contract with MSA.

Birnbrich said his memorandum is meant to address Manibusan's comments and suggestions that were conveyed to him (Birnbrich) and Atalig through emails on March 14, 2022.

Birnbrich informed Manibusan that they have taken his suggestion and revised the indemnity clause in the proposed contract to only be applicable to the CNMI instead of being a mutual indemnity clause.

As for the suggestion that they include a provision where MSA must obtain insurance and the CNMI is named a beneficiary in case of loss, they do not believe such a clause is needed for this agreement, Birnbrich said.

He pointed out that first and foremost, the CNMI does not have an insurable interest.

"Here, if a plane crashes, nothing of value to the CNMI is lost. It is, of course, a horrible loss for the people on the plane, families of those members, and for the airline. However, it is not a loss for the CNMI in any direct property or pecuniary way," the legal counsel said.

Citing the Marianas Visitors Authority's airline incentive agreement, Birnbrich noted that the CNMI has never to his knowledge required insurance in an airline incentive agreement.

Even more, he said, airlines are a highly regulated business.

Birnbrich said Marianas Pacific Express LLC is affiliated with a reputable and successful airline, Southern Airways, which has immense experience with interisland travel across the nation and is the only available interisland air-transportation provider that can immediately meet the CNMI's need for more affordable and accessible interisland travel options within the Marianas.

He said they believe that the agreement protects the CNMI and gives real value for its investment.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

UNITED

From Page 1

lines' fares from Saipan to Guam. A recent statement from United Corporate Communications attempts to clarify the matter.

"In general, fares vary depending on many factors such as travel demand, travel dates, seasonality, and others. United offers Guam and Northern Mariana Islands resident fares. These fares can be accessed by updating your location on United's website (united.com) to Guam or the Northern Mariana Islands, or by visiting your local travel agency or the Guam United City Ticket Office. We continue to try to offer a variety of fares to meet the demand of our customers," said United.

You can change your location by clicking the globe icon at the top right side of United's website before searching for flights.

Saipan Tribune did this and found that once changing the location to "Northern Mariana Islands," fare rates from Saipan to Guam dropped tremendously from around $600 to $380 for a roundtrip ticket.

In addition, the CNMI still has other options with commercial carriers like Marianas Southern Airways and Star Marianas.

Currently, Marianas Southern Airways provides daily flights from Saipan to Guam, five days a week, staring at $99.

Currently, Star Marianas provides daily air service from Rota to Guam at around $130.

MSA

From Page 1

Keith Stewart, MSA president, said in an interview last Friday that, with all that has happened regarding the recent termination of their $8 million contract with the CNMI to provide affordable interisland air service, he is asking that the community make its voice heard.

"If the community wants us, we just ask that they please let the administration know, let the Legislature know. If they don't, then that's a message we will hear as well and take steps accordingly," he said.

To clarify that the contract between MSA and the former CNMI administration was executed legally, Stewart stated that MSA and its parent company, Marianas Pacific Express LLC, has nothing to hide. He has since posted a copy of the entire contract on MSA's official Facebook page.

"We've got nothing to hide. The contract complied with CNMI rules and regulations. It was signed off by the former secretary of Finance stating that the funds have been committed, it even provided an account number showing the funds were there, and the attorney general also signed off on it, certifying that it has been reviewed and approved on a legal capacity. There were no backroom deals," he said.

Back in November 2021, when the CNMI's lone interisland service provider, Star Marianas, suspended its services, an emergency declaration was issued by former governor Ralph DLG Torres, stating there was an emergency need for airline service for Rota and Tinian.

"The governor reached out to me because they knew we were working on an international airline and he thought it was a long shot that we would even be interested in interisland service. I was told that he also went and approached several others and even tried to work something out with Star Marianas during the time. What ended up happening was that I talked to our airline consultant off of Australia if he could go and work on because I was busy at the time and he brought in Southern Airways by reaching out to Stan Little in Florida. Stan flew down a few weeks later and we ended up reaching an agreement and decided to work on a proposal together that we eventually submitted to the former secretary of Finance in Jan. 2022," Stewart said.

"It wasn't until March of 2022 that we signed a contract with the administration. I have no idea if there were others who submitted proposals, we only control ourselves. We did hear there was another proposal from another company earlier on that was looking at coming down to the CNMI to provide interisland air service," Stewart added.

Stewart said the contract termination and the recent statements issued by CNMI stakeholders are damaging MSA's and Southern Airways' reputations and it is frustrating.

"The cancellation of our contract with the government has spread across the world and Southern Airways has been reached out to and contacted by a number of entities out there on the airline side, trying to figure out what is going on. I think both Southern and I are extremely frustrated that our reputation is being questioned. That's something, even on Southern Airways' side, that they're as upset about as anything else. I'm trying to keep this under control, and I don't know where they're going to go and what steps they're going to be taking. It's extremely unfortunate. In spite of it, we're willing to come back to the table and work something out. If not, there are other places that are in dire need of air service and want airlines coming into their community. I hate to see that happen," he said. "However, on our side, we are still hopeful that we can sort something out with the administration."

DUCKS

From Page 1

ber duck raced to first place, followed by Jasmin Ngirmekur's duck for second place and $500; third place for $200 was Ha'ani Diaz's duck; and fourth place was Alex Domingo's duck for $50.

Along with the duck race, there was also a two-man Swim Relay in which teams had to swim in duck gear such as a duck hat and fins.

Marianas High School students and Saipan Swim Club teammates Jakey Deleon Guerrero and Taiyo Akimaru swam to the finish line first—complete with their duck gear and won a PIC Explorer Membership worth around $1,000.

Second place was the tandem of Piper Raho and Nagi Tenorio for a PIC Waterpark Membership worth around $800.

PIC Animations and Events manager Reymark Castro said after the event that they are happy with the turnout. "We're super happy and stoked with everyone who participated. Everything went well. We are glad that the community still supports our fight against cancer and the [Commonwealth Cancer Association] as well," he said. "We plan to do this every year and we don't plan to stop."

For next year, Castro said they want to shoot for over 5,000 ducks in the river as he said that has happened before.

The mechanics of the fundraiser involve selling as many of the rubber ducks as possible, which are then floated around PIC's Lazy River. The first to get to the finish line without any outside interference wins.

Proceeds of the event will go toward CCA's effort for programs, outreach, advocacy, screening for oral cancer in the CNMI.

Newly appointed CCA board member Monique Boyer Sablan thanked the PIC and E-Land group for "being able to kick off all of our endeavors post-pandemic. It's really nice to see everyone in the community willing to support the CCA and its mission. Everyone is affected somehow by cancer in the CNMI and so it's awesome to be able to see the community come together again for such an amazing event."

She also thanked the community for their support and purchasing tickets to the event.

She said that the CCA board has a lot in store for this year, with the Marianas March Against Cancer in the works for a comeback after a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Magazine donates $20K to non-profits in Guam, Saipan

BARRIGADA, Guam—*Guam Business Magazine* announced on Feb. 23 the donation of $20,000 to four non-profits in Guam and Saipan. They are the Guam Chapter of the American Red Cross, the Guam Memorial Hospital Volunteers Association, Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI, and The Salvation Army Saipan Corps. Each of the beneficiaries is receiving $5,000.

Funds for the donations were raised through the *Guam Business Magazine* 2022 Executive of the Year Gala, held on Feb. 11 at the Hyatt Regency Guam.

Leadership of Glimpses of Guam (which publishes the magazine) and its Group met with representatives of three of the non-profits on Feb. 23 in Guam to recognize their hard work on behalf of the community and announce the donations.

Each of the non-profits spoke at the event about their work.

Rose P. Grino, Health Care Delivery administrator for TakeCare Insurance/FHP Health Center and board member of the Red Cross; said, "As we all know, the American Red Cross is there in every disaster, big or small. Ninety percent of our workforce at American Red Cross are volunteers. I think each one of you or family members have experienced the work of the American Red Cross. Thank you for this financial gift, as it's going to make a difference in the work we do, not only in our community in Guam but also in Micronesia and around the world. On behalf of our executive director, Chita A. Blaise, and the rest of the volunteer board and the many volunteers that we have at the American Red Cross, we express our heartfelt gratitude and continued support at American Red Cross."

GUAM BUSINESS MAGAZINE

At the presentation in Guam recognizing the *Guam Business Magazine* donation of $20,000 were, from left, Eric Tydingco, president and CEO, Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI; Rose P. Grino, Health Care Delivery administrator for TakeCare Insurance/FHP Health Center and board member of the Red Cross; Ken Duenas, director, Glimpses Media, Glimpses of Guam; Maureen N. Maratita, publisher, Glimpses Media, Glimpses of Guam; Marcos Fong, Group CEO; Caroline H. Sablan, vice president and Relationship Banking manager, Bank of Guam and board member, Red Cross; Jina Rojas, executive director of the Diabetes Foundation of Guam and vice president, GMHVA; Antonia "Toni" Pecon, president of GMHVA; and Joyce Q. Crisostomo, executive director of CarsPlus Guam and director of Make-A-Wish.

Jina Rojas, executive director of the Diabetes Foundation of Guam and vice president of GMHVA; said, "On behalf of our 100-plus members we are very grateful for this contribution. A lot of people don't know about all our programs that our volunteers do. Our main mission is to improve the quality of care to the patients at Guam Memorial Hospital, and what we do is enhance that care by our programs in patient services and assisting pediatric families who need pediatric care. We support the hospital by raising funds to purchase much needed lifesaving equipment and so much more. We run the gift shop that has been around for 57 years."

Eric Tydingco, president and CEO of Make-A-Wish Guam and CNMI; said, "We grant wishes to children in Guam and the CNMI with critical illnesses and we are 100% donation-driven and rely on the generosity of the community. With it, we will grant wishes and more wishes that will allow us to do that for our kids who are waiting for their wishes to be granted."

Guam Business Magazine will similarly soon recognize the efforts of the Salvation Army Saipan Corps on Saipan. ***(PR)***

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MTEC, MVA engage Tinian students in outreach

Students of Tinian Jr./Sr. High School share their knowledge of the Marianas tourism industry as Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda, right, guides the dialogue. The MVA and Marianas Tourism Education Council presented at the school on Feb. 17, 2023. MTEC

The Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority engaged students at Tinian Elementary School and Tinian Jr./Sr. High School last Feb. 17, with tourism talk touching on the unique attractions of Tinian.

MTEC acting chairwoman Vicky Benavente led the presentation in sharing information about the Marianas tourism industry and encouraging students to consider how they can personally contribute to tourism at a young age.

"We appreciate the support of the Tinian MYWAVE Club advisers at the elementary school level, as well as the middle school and high school," said Benavente. "The MTEC Educational Outreach Program will only succeed with the collaboration of our educators and students."

MYWAVE stands for Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically.

MTEC and the MVA aim to visit all public schools this school year with the message, "Tourism is Everybody's Business," targeting 10th, seventh, and fourth graders. The MTEC presentation includes highlights of number of visitor arrivals, source markets, travel motivations, the benefits of tourism, careers in travel and tourism, and ideas on how students can engage with tourism. The MVA presentation covers the mandate of the office and the work of its divisions, especially marketing and signature events like the annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival held last weekend.

MTEC

Students of Tinian Elementary School respond to questions during the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority at the school on Feb. 17, 2023.

Students of Tinian Elementary responded enthusiastically to an impromptu marketing scenario between two competition beach destinations, with MVA Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda trying to convince them to visit the Marianas and MTEC board member Catherine Perry touting the selling points of Hawaii. By popular vote of the young students, the Marianas won.

Other MTEC board members are Martin Duenas (MVA), Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero (Northern Marianas College), Larry Lee, Naomi Nishimura (CNMI Public School System), Glenn Policare (Kanoa Resort Saipan), and Gordon Marciano (PDI). Dr. Yunzi Zhang of Northern Marianas College School of Business also volunteers with the council. ***(MTEC)***

Fourth graders of Tinian Elementary School attend the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority at their school on Feb. 17, 2023. The presentation was led by MTEC acting chairwoman Vicky Benavente, center left in blue. MTEC

Students of Tinian High School attend the presentation of the Marianas Tourism Education Council and Marianas Visitors Authority at their school on Feb. 17, 2023. The presentation was led by MTEC acting chairwoman Vicky Benavente, front row, second left. MTEC

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 02-2023

Opening date: February 20, 2023 Closing date: March 10, 2023

Location: SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) ARFF General Maintenance I	PL 3/1 to 3/12 ($8.01/hr. to $13.70/hr.)
(1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr. to $15.85/hr.)
(1) Lease Compliance Assistant	PL 14/1 to 14/12 ($13.70/hr. to $23.42/hr.)
(1) Information Systems Specialist	PL 15/1 to 15/12 ($14.38/hr. to $24.60/hr.)

Location: PORT OF SAIPAN	SALARY
Position(s): (2) Vessel Traffic Controller	PL 4/1 to 4/12 ($8.41/hr. to $14.38/hr.)

Location: TINIAN	SALARY
Position(s): (1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr. to $15.10/hr.)
(1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer	PL 7/1 to 7/12 ($9.73/hr. to $16.65/hr.)
(1) Custodial-I	PL 1/1 to 1/12 ($7.26/hr. to $12.42/hr.)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport no later than ***5:00 P.M. on Friday, March 10, 2023.***

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

THROUGH BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

Over $28M allotted for Pacific for water infrastructure upgrades

SAN FRANCISCO—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Friday over $2.4 billion from President Joe Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for states, Tribes, and territories through this year's Clean Water State Revolving Fund, including over $28 million for American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

The funding will support communities in upgrading essential water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure that protects public health and treasured water bodies across the nation. Nearly half of this funding will be available as grants or principal forgiveness loans helping underserved communities across America invest in water infrastructure, while creating good-paying jobs.

"President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is delivering an unprecedented investment in America that will revitalize essential water and wastewater infrastructure across the country," said EPA administrator Michael S. Regan. "Not only will these funds expand access to clean water and safeguard the environment, but more underserved communities that have been left behind for far too long will be able to access them."

"President Biden has been clear—we cannot leave any community behind as we rebuild America's water infrastructure," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman. "Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the U.S. Pacific Island Territories will be able to fund clean water projects, ensuring small, rural, and disadvantaged communities have access to these critical water resources."

The $2.4 billion announced Friday is the second wave of funding made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and builds on the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to invest in America. In May 2022, EPA announced the initial allotment of $1.9 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to states, Tribes and territories through the CWSRF. That money is supporting hundreds of critical water infrastructure projects around the country.

Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law makes over $50 billion available for water and wastewater infrastructure improvements across the country between fiscal years 2022 and 2026. EPA is committed to ensuring every community has access to this historic investment and has centralized increasing investment in disadvantaged communities within its implementation. ***(EPA)***

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

5.0-magnitude quake in Rota region

At 1:24am on Feb. 25, 2023, a report of a 5.0-magnitude earthquake occurred at 14.079°N 146.790°E in the Rota region of the Northern Mariana Islands. Currently, there are no tsunami warnings or advisories issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. ***(PR)***

Superior Court to draw prospective jurors

Pursuant to 7 CMC § 3106, notice is hereby given that the Clerk of the Superior Court will be publicly drawing prospective jurors for Panels 23AS, 23BS, 23CS, 23DS, 23ES, 23FS, 23GS, 23HS, 23IS, 23JS, 23KS, 23LS, 23MS, 23NS, 23OS, 23PS, 23QS, 23RS, 23SS, 23TS, 23US, 23VS, 23WS, 23XS, 23YS, and 23ZS on March 3, 2023, at 10am before Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho in Courtroom 220A of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Superior Court. ***(PR)***

Scheduled power service interruption today

There will be a power service interruption today, Feb. 27, 2023, in Kagman III, from 1pm to 5pm, affecting Kagman 3 (Phase 1, 2, 4, and partial area of Phase 3) Kagman Community Center, Kagman Fire Station, Kagman Elementary School, Chacha Ocean View Middle School, and Kagman High School. ***(PR)***

Kagman cluster of schools PTSA meeting

This is to inform all parents, guardians, and the community that the Kagman cluster of schools (Kagman Elementary School, Chacha Ocean View Middle School, and Kagman High School) will be having a PTSA meeting tomorrow, Feb. 28, at 5:30pm, at the Chacha Ocean View Middle School cafeteria. ***(PR)***

New winding down plan for Medicaid in the works

» **Presumptive Eligibility coverage to end on May 11**

Upon further guidance from the Centers for Medicaid and CHIP Services related to Section 5131 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023, CNMI Medicaid will no longer automatically terminate coverage on March 31, 2023. A new plan to unwind is underway and will be disseminated to the affected members and the public as soon as possible.

Additionally, upon further clarification, it has been determined that Presumptive Eligibility coverage will expire on the same day following the National Public Health Emergency end date of May 11, 2023. There are currently no plans to extend this benefit, therefore, CNMI Medicaid highly encourages all affected members to complete a full Medicaid Application as soon as possible to avoid disruption in health care services.

The Commonwealth Medicaid Agency is committed to ensuring all affected members are given an opportunity to be determined for continued benefits. CMA apologizes for any confusion and is working diligently to assure its members' healthcare services are not disrupted abruptly. We kindly ask for your patience and understanding as we explore other options for members who may no longer be eligible for Regular Medicaid benefits with the limited resources available today.

Please contact the Commonwealth Medicaid Agency to update your mailing and contact information.

Saipan Office:
Capitol Hill, Gov't. Bldg. 1252
Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
Office hours: Monday to Thursday: 7:30am to 1pm (Closed on Fridays)

Tinian:
Tinian Health Center
Tel: (670) 433-9263/9233
Office hours: Monday to Friday: 7:30am to 4:30pm

Rota:
Rota Health Center
Tel: (670) 532-9461/62
Office hours: Monday to Friday: 7:30am to 4:30pm

Website: medicaid.cnmi.mp ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-23-016

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF BACKHOES AND TRENCHER FOR THE ISLANDS OF SAIPAN, TINIAN AND ROTA

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of five (5) backhoes and one (1) trencher for the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to assist with daily operations for the CUC Water and Wastewater systems.

This project is grant funded from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Department of the Interior Office of Insular Affairs (DOI-OIA).

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-23-016, Supply and Delivery of Backhoes and Trencher for the Islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota)"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 7, 2023** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on February 24, 2023**, to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 4th Quarter General Membership Meeting on February 28, 2023, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Aqua Resort.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of the Agenda of February 28, 2023
IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of December 29, 2022
V. Reports
  a. Chairman
  b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
  c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
  d. Executive Director
VI. New Business
  a. April 2023 Autism Awareness Month
  b. May 2023 Mental Health Awareness Month
  c. CNMI-UCEDD Summit – June 2023
VII. Old Business
  a. Family Transition Symposium
  b. Meet Your Policymaker Event
  c. Champions of Equal Opportunity Award Ceremony
  d. March 2023 Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
VIII. Miscellaneous
IX. Next Meeting
X. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes of oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Concepcion Ulloa
Chairperson

This ad is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award total $274,744 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 40

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

First and last anniversary: Ukraine invasion enters year two. There should be no three

One year ago, Vladimir Putin's euphemistic "special military operation" was launched in Ukraine, forever altering the lives of millions.

Perhaps most notable is the pointlessness of the suffering. Putin's tanks didn't roll into Ukrainian territory to defeat a sinister regime full of neo-Nazis, despite the Russian despot's absurd and insistent claims to the contrary. There was no human rights violation to be stopped, no legitimate claim to self-defense. Even in such extreme situations, war should be the last resort, the only remaining option once all others have been exhausted, a decision made with the utmost care and solemnity.

To bring that hell to Earth in the absence of those forceful reasons is beyond absurd. To do so lightly, out of an apparent overconfidence and as a gimmick to distract from political turmoil at home and project some sort of strongman image abroad, as Putin has done, is beyond sadistic. Nothing will justify his actions, either against the people of Ukraine or the people of Russia. After all, the fool's grand designs have done irreparable harm not only to his neighbor but his own country.

In one year, more than 100,000 Ukrainian troops and more than 8,000 civilians lost their lives. Another 100,000 Russian troops and tens of thousands more mercenaries, a decent chunk of whom were never properly trained or even informed that they were going off to war, or were recruited from prisons, are dead, nothing but cannon fodder for Putin's aspirations. We can't bring any of these people back, but we must stop these numbers from rising.

That means that, by the time we've next spun around the sun, this war should be over. That's likely not going to happen with either military crushing the other, and Ukraine certainly won't and shouldn't stop defending its territorial integrity. That means Putin must be forced to the negotiating table to engage in a mediated withdrawal, facing both crushing economic consequences and the international community's steadfast support of Ukraine, including with military armaments. No more bloodshed.

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Did Putin just inch Russia and the US closer to nuclear war?

By DAVID C. LOGAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Moscow will suspend implementation of New START, the last remaining treaty between Russia and the United States limiting deployed nuclear weapons.

New START limits the number of "strategic" nuclear warheads that Russia and the United States can deploy to 1,550 and the number of deployed strategic nuclear-capable missiles and bombers to 700. The agreement, like its predecessors, was important in limiting arms race pressures, strengthening strategic stability and facilitating communication, transparency and predictability between the world's two largest nuclear powers.

Putin's decision, a "suspension" rather than a full withdrawal, is a partial measure. Russia is still party to the agreement. Moscow has claimed that it would continue to adhere to the numerical ceilings established in New START and that it would continue to comply with a 1988 agreement with the U.S. to exchange notifications of launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The immediate effects of the suspension are likely limited. The U.S. can still monitor Russian compliance through what are called "national technical means," which include satellite imagery. Russia's ongoing nuclear modernization is already costly and behind schedule and the sanctions against Russia could further jeopardize those efforts. However, Russian suspension of the treaty will, for now, likely mean an end to treaty-mandated data exchanges, on-site inspections and meetings of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC), a body established by the treaty to facilitate implementation and compliance.

The treaty was already under pressure. Earlier this year, the State Department, in a report to Congress, stated that Russia was not complying. Under the treaty, each side is permitted to conduct a limited number of on-site inspections of the other's nuclear bases annually and may convene meetings of the Bilateral Consultative Commission to discuss compliance concerns. According to the State Department report, Moscow has denied American inspectors access to Russian nuclear facilities and failed to convene a session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission in a timely fashion.

Putin's decision may give legal cover to Russia's previous decisions to deny U.S. inspectors access and is a sop to domestic hardliners already skeptical of arms control agreements. But his decision may have had other motives as well. It likely also signals a willingness to impose costs on the U.S. for its support of Ukraine when Russia lacks other credible military or economic tools.

The decision could also entail costs for Russia. The U.S. could match Russian suspension and stop providing data or permitting inspections. Indeed, a U.S. official stated that "The principles of reciprocity, mutual predictability, and mutual stability will continue to guide the U.S. approach to implementation of the New START Treaty." The suspension will further increase Russia's diplomatic costs worldwide. Commenting on Putin's announcement, a spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry, while refraining from criticizing Russia, still noted that Beijing "hopes the two sides can properly resolve the differences through constructive dialogue and consultation to ensure the treaty's sound implementation."

Russian suspension of New START is only the latest arms control casualty. In 2019, President Trump, citing evidence of Russian noncompliance, suspended and ultimately withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia, which prohibited deployments of ground-based missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers (about 310 to 3,400 miles). In 2020, the U.S. announced it would withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, an agreement that facilitated transparency by permitting reciprocal unarmed aerial surveillance flights. The U.S. withdrawal, which was opposed by NATO allies (and also Ukraine), was premised on allegations of Russian violations—and was followed shortly afterward by Russian withdrawal.

So what does Putin's latest move mean?

First, it demonstrates that Russia is increasingly unwilling to compartmentalize elements of its relations with the United States. In the past, Russia (and its Soviet predecessor) and the U.S. managed to negotiate, extend and implement nuclear arms agreements while clashing on other issues.

Second, it further undermines nuclear arms control efforts, placing a unique agreement—set to expire in 2026—on life support. The treaty is the last of its kind; no other nuclear states have ever negotiated limits to their nuclear forces. Its poor health may signal to other nuclear-armed states that arms control may not be worthwhile.

It will be important for the United States not to react rashly or get drawn into an arms race. U.S. strategic nuclear forces are still strong and the balance is unlikely to change in the near-term. But nuclear arms control as an international project has certainly been further diminished.

David C. Logan is an assistant professor at the U.S. Naval War College. The views expressed here are those of the author alone.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Quakes are inevitable. Huge death tolls are not

By GEAROID REIDY
Bloomberg Opinion

Gearoid Reidy is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering Japan and the Koreas. He previously led the breaking news team in North Asia, and was the Tokyo deputy bureau chief.*

Earthquakes can neither be prevented nor predicted. If a Category 5 typhoon nears, evacuations are possible; there can be time to move to a safe zone before the pyroclastic flow of a volcano sweeps all in its path. But when the earth shakes, it almost never comes with a warning. Even in the most technologically prepared countries, there's typically just seconds to alert operating rooms and halt trains before the devastation hits.

It's safe to say that Turkey and war-torn Syria are far from the most-prepared countries. The death toll from February's quakes is nearing 50,000, and expected to rise further with untold numbers still missing. The damage is continuing, with more deaths coming from powerful aftershocks collapsing buildings that survived the initial tremors. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said that it was "impossible to prepare" for a disaster this big.

In terms of preventing it from occurring, that's true. But considering the saying among seismic watchers—that earthquakes don't kill people, buildings do—and it's convenient at best. Damage from temblors can never be eliminated, but it can be mitigated with modern building techniques. Japan, for example, has become a pioneer of cutting-edge techniques such as seismic isolation.

With over 300,000 apartments destroyed in Turkey, fingers are already being pointed at below-par building codes and corruption in construction quality and enforcement. A 2019 "amnesty" hailed by Erdogan seems to have allowed builders to simply pay fines to get around standards. Syria, meanwhile, is in no position to enforce such rules, with a dozen years of brutality by President Bashar Al-Assad's regime devastating the country and bringing to the economy to its knees.

It would be a mistake, however, to shrug this off as the problems of an increasingly authoritarian developing nation and one paralyzed by over a decade of war. Some experts warn that building codes in much of the U.S., on which Turkey's were based, mean disaster may not be so far from home.

In most U.S. states, including those at greatest risk from quakes like California, the relevant building code is a "minimum requirement" standard that specifically assumes buildings may be damaged even beyond repair, aiming to keep construction costs low while reducing the likelihood of death. That sounds good in theory, but in practice means that even if a temblor of expected strength hits California, the codes "are not intended to ensure a building will be useable or even repairable after strong shaking," according to one report from the Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research Center.

Its conclusions find that, if such a quake hits, the chances for "life safety"—jargon for the prevention of deaths—in so-called ordinary buildings such as homes, schools and offices is "likely." That's good news. But if a quake strikes at the upper bounds of what buildings were built for, that probability drops to "possibly."

The devastation of a West Coast event, even of recent magnitudes, could be much greater than many anticipate. Expectations are often rooted to the most recent occasions in living memory; for the U.S., this means 1989 in Loma Prieta and 1994 in Northridge. Both were below magnitude 7, causing fewer than 100 fatalities.

But quakes occur on geological timelines, not human ones. The ancient past doesn't need to be examined to find far more damaging events: the 1906 magnitude 7.9 San Francisco tremor, for example, or the Cascadia subduction zone event in 1700, estimated to have had a magnitude of between 8.7 and 9.2.

A Cascadia event is estimated to happen about once every 500 years, with the last coming before the area had been settled by Europeans. The U.S. Navy is so concerned, it's halting four dry docks on the West Coast while it boosts safety standards.

Preparations can be made. Just ask Japan. While 20,000 died almost 12 years ago when the strongest quake the country ever experienced struck off the north of the country, fewer than 5% came as a result of the shaking; the vast majority were killed in the subsequent tsunami.

That's down to tougher building standards, the result of tragic trial and error. Multiple revisions to the construction code have been made since the country rushed to rebuild after World War II. After extensive damage to housing from a tremor in 1978, it was significantly overhauled in 1981, becoming a standard that emphasizes both preventing collapse of buildings and saving the lives of those inside.

Some 80% of deaths in Kobe in 1995 came from collapsing buildings. But the damage was overwhelmingly to those made under the pre-1981 standard. Japan has doubled down, offering preferential loans for dwellings that meet newer codes. Most of the buildings that suffered the greatest damage in the 2004 Niigata temblor, the 2011 disaster or the 2016 Kumamoto earthquake were built under the old code, and few had been retrofitted, according to an analysis by veteran seismic specialist Tsuneo Okada of the University of Tokyo.

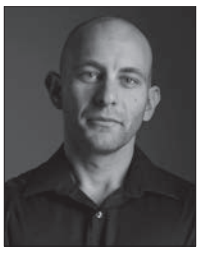
The country's disposable approach to buildings has its downsides, most notably in largely static property prices. But it also means that within the next decade, the government aims to mostly eliminate the stock of pre-1981 dwellings.

Even so, experts have few delusions: a major earthquake is inevitable. Tokyo estimates a long-feared temblor directly under the city of similar strength to 1923's would still destroy as many as 175,000 dwellings from shaking alone. Combined with fires, it is expected to lead to up to 23,000 deaths. And Japan has its own history of dodgy construction issues: falsification of data has been found by both architects and firms supplying shock absorbers, while liquefaction was such an issue after 2011 that it closed Disneyland Tokyo for weeks.

Nonetheless, most estimates show lifting building standards to levels that would hugely improve outcomes isn't hugely expensive. Over a long enough timeline, devastating quakes are certain to hit major metropolitan areas—we just can't know when. Just as with the COVID pandemic, rich countries like the U.S., in theory best placed to endure them, might end up the most vulnerable. The tragedy in Turkey and Syria must serve as a wake-up call.

Is more military spending really necessary?

By MIKE BRAND
Progressive Perspectives



Mike Brand is an adjunct professor of human rights and genocide studies at the University of Connecticut, a Senior Fellow at George Mason University's Raphaël Lemkin Genocide Prevention Program, and an atrocities prevention and peacebuilding advocate. Follow Mike @miketheidealist.

This spring, President Joe Biden is poised to ask Congress for the largest defense budget in history. These budget increases would be on top of an already historically high defense budget.

At the end of 2022, Biden signed the National Defense Authorization Act into law. The bipartisan bill, passed overwhelmingly by the Democrat-controlled Congress, appropriated $858 billion in defense spending. That $858 billion was $45 billion more than Biden requested and $90 billion more than last year's defense spending bill.

In every election cycle, voters, politicians and pundits are quick to question how we are going to pay for programs like Medicaid and Social Security. Budget hawks, however, rarely ask how, in 2022, we can afford a $90 billion increase in defense spending, or the $858 billion total price tag. Now, Biden wants to increase defense spending even more.

Progressive members of Congress like Reps. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., and Sens. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Chris Murphy, D-Conn., have spoken out against these absurd increases, but it is not enough. Voters need to start paying attention to foreign policy and defense spending when they cast their votes. Foreign policy is not often a top priority for voters, yet we are spending nearly $1 trillion per year on our military and we have virtually no evidence to suggest that military operations abroad are successful.

This is not just about absurd military spending, it is about where we spend our money and why; what our priorities are as a country; what we value and what we want to achieve. There are, for example, several domestic and international issues that could be addressed if we prioritized them over military spending.

The United States consistently spends more on its military than the next nine highest-spending countries combined. Is that really necessary? Is the U.S. military actually effective at solving international issues? I suspect the answer to both is "no."

To respond effectively to today's challenges, the United States must invest more money in conflict prevention, good governance and civil society support. It is long past time to cut military spending and increase funding for the diplomatic and development arms of U.S. foreign policy.

The State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development operate with a small fraction of the military's budget. For fiscal year 2023, the State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act was funded at $59.85 billion plus an additional $16.57 billion in assistance to Ukraine and Ukraine-related assistance. That combined $76.42 billion has to pay for all of the United States' embassies around the world, all of our development programs, all humanitarian response and U.S. contributions to international organizations, among other things.

The U.S. spends less than 10% of the military's budget on all of that, and we wonder why we are not seeing the results we want to see.

The global challenges we face today are not ones that our military can solve. The United States is not sending our military into countries around the world to resolve conflicts, protect people from human rights abuses or respond to famines and droughts. In cases when our military is deployed, it is not clear that it actually results in a positive outcome.

On a more tangible level, the military can throw more money and more bombs at a problem without ever assessing if their efforts are working. We've seen this with the "war on terror," bombings in Somalia, bungled efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and countless other places. The Department of Defense (DOD) has never even passed an annual audit. The most recent audit showed that the DOD was unable to account for 61% of its assets.

The military doesn't even effectively monitor how many civilians are killed or how many people are pushed toward extremism with actions like drone strikes. Last year, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Rep. Sara Jacobs, D-Calif., wrote to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin telling him they were "troubled" that the Defense Department's annual report to Congress "appears to undercount civilian casualties."

So long as we keep spending an inordinate amount of money on our military, we will continue to have a military-first approach to foreign policy. This colors the way we look at the world and how the world looks at us.

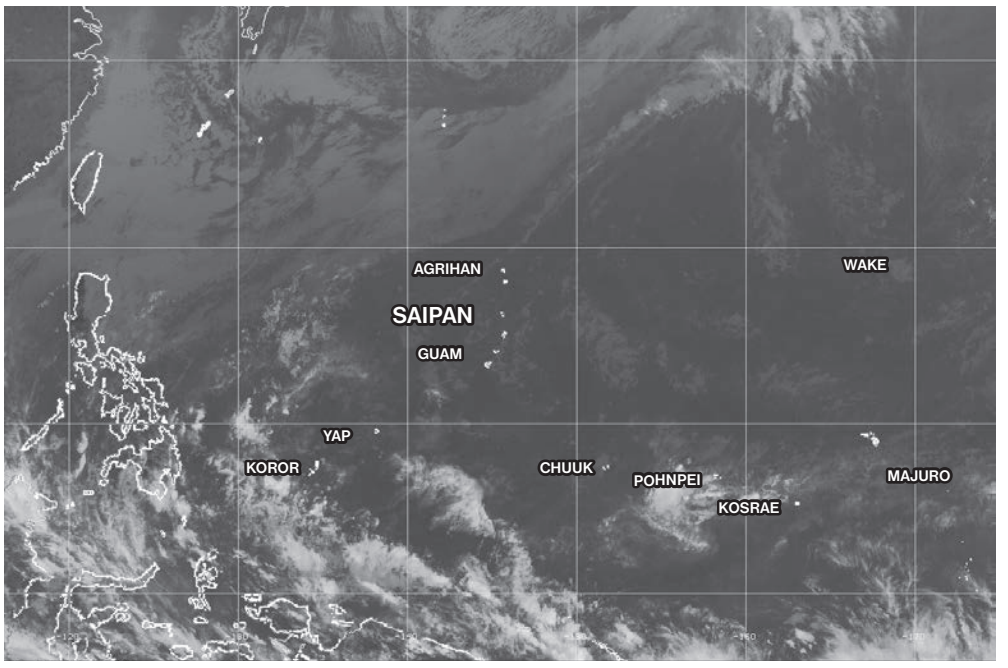
To get out of our military-first mentality, voters need to start paying attention to candidates' positions on foreign policy, how their elected officials choose to spend our tax dollars and how presidents conduct foreign policy.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny	Scattered showers. Partly sunny	A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny
86º / 76º	86º / 76º	86º / 76º	84º / 74º	85º / 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:33 AM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and Radar show partly cloudy skies and isolated showers across the coastal waters this morning. Combined seas of 6 to 7 feet from the buoys due to the predominately east swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Scattered Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 76°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Isolated Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Isolated Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Isolated Thunderstorms	83° / 78°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Tuesday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Wednesday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Thursday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:02 AM	11:34 AM
Tuesday	-	12:57 AM	12:21 PM
Wednesday	-	1:51 AM	1:11 PM
Thursday	-	2:44 AM	2:02 PM
Friday	-	3:33 AM	2:55 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Thunderstorms	70° / 60°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	57° / 35°
Hong Kong	Sunny	65° / 59°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny/Wind	79° / 71°
London	Partly Cloudy	48° / 36°
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	54° / 46°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	84° / 75°
Melbourne	Showers	66° / 61°
Miami	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
New York	Partly Cloudy	49° / 31°
Osaka	Sunny	56° / 37°
Paris	Showers	75° / 60°
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	80° / 72°
Rome	Light Rain	56° / 44°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	78° / 59°
San Francisco	Rain	51° / 43°
Seoul	Sunny	51° / 25°
Tokyo	Sunny	55° / 39°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	58° / 37°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:05 AM	Low Tide	1.35
6:49 AM	High Tide	1.03
12:11 PM	Low Tide	1.59
8:04 PM	High Tide	0.06

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:30AM	7:25AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:50PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	6:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
TW9308	3:50AM	7:20AM	1, 4, 5, 7
OZ624	3:50PM	7:40PM	3, 6
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA189	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:20PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:20PM	3, 6
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:45PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	9:20PM	2:50AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 13, 2023

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:20 A.M.	11:38 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:40 P.M.	3:58 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:40 A.M.	9:58 A.M.	6,7

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	12:18 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:20 P.M.	4:38 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
10:20 A.M.	10:38 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:20 A.M.	8:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:00 P.M.	5:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:40 A.M.	8:20 A.M.	6,7

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
10:20 A.M.	11:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
6:00 P.M.	6:40 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
8:40 A.M.	9:20 A.M.	6,7

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:00 P.M.	1:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2:00 P.M.	3:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
7:00 P.M.	8:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
11:00 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	6,7

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1:30 P.M.	2:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
5:30 P.M.	6:30 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
9:00 P.M.	10:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
12:30 P.M.	1:30 P.M.	6,7

ROTA TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:20 A.M.	8:55 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
4:25 P.M.	5:00 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

GUAM TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:25 A.M.	10:00 A.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3:30 P.M.	4:05 P.M.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Air Force pilots and cousins recall journey from UOG

Two University of Guam alumni fly for their jobs—at an altitude of tens of thousands of feet.

As pilots in the U.S. Air Force, they share the skies, familial ties as cousins, and a history of having earned degrees at UOG in the same year—both with honors—in 2011.

Capt. Celestino "Torch" Aguon flies an F-15 Eagle fighter jet, while his cousin, Capt. Dustin Quinn Alger, flies a KC-135 Stratotanker.

Stationed in Okinawa, the cousins are on island this month for the Cope North military exercise hosted by Andersen Air Force Base. The exercise involves the United States, Japan, and Australia.

There have been times when Alger's KC-135 would refuel Aguon's F-15 at 30,000 feet. When the two pilots are in refueling mode, there would be a "hafa adai" and other Guam-unique chatter, they said, laughing.

And there were also times they've flown over Guam and seen not just the island but their alma mater from the air. That feeling of seeing tiny Guam—and even tinier UOG—"It just connects you more—it never gets old," said Alger.

STAFF SGT. DIVINE COX, 36TH WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Air Force Capt. Celestino "Torch" Aguon, left, and his cousin, Capt. Dustin Quinn Alger, graduated from the University of Guam in 2011 with honors. Aguon flies an F-15 fighter jet while Alger flies a KC-135 Stratotanker, a refueling plane. They are seen on Feb. 22, 2023, on Andersen Air Force Base while participating in the multinational Cope North exercise.

Paths to becoming pilots

Aguon graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in mathematics at UOG. He entered UOG as a merit scholar from George Washington High School.

Alger graduated magna cum laude with a business administration degree specializing in finance and economics and is a graduate of Simon Sanchez High School.

Their UOG degrees and honors, along with their other accomplishments, opened separate paths for them to qualify for Air Force Officer Training School and ultimately meet the rigorous training to be pilots.

"Time management, study habits and problem-solving are the main lessons learned from my education at UOG," said Aguon. "I remember being in the late Dr. Lynn Raulerson's Biology 101 Class my freshman year. She was someone who upheld the standard. I remember scoring a 'C' on my first major quiz, and that was a huge wake-up call for me after graduating from GWHS in 2006 in the Top 10. I went on to finish her first and second-semester biology courses with an 'A.' Her honest and blunt feedback has repeatedly resonated with me throughout my entire aviation career."

In addition to giving credit to his UOG degree to get into the officer training school, Alger looks to Aguon as a mentor who gave him the idea to apply for a pilot slot in the Air Force.

"It wasn't until I was looking for opportunities to commission when the pilot kind of career came into my mind—and then actually got in contact with this guy," said Alger.

Both also credit their respective families' support.

Family support crucial

Prior to applying to be a pilot, Aguon took flight training with private instructors to build his experience. His parents, Tino and Alicia Aguon, took out a home equity line of credit to support his aspirations. "It was a huge risk on their part in hindsight," Aguon said.

Dr. Alicia Aguon is the dean of the School of Education at UOG, who, along with her husband, encouraged their son to pursue a STEM-related degree.

"Our local public and private school students and our UOG graduates—they can compete with anyone and achieve their goals," Dr. Alicia Aguon said.

Alger also expresses gratitude to his parents, Doris Atalig Leon Guerrero and Paul Alger. His mother served in the Air Force in the medical field, and was last stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, until her recent retirement.

Both pilots give their solid foundation from home—doing chores, focusing on getting a degree, keeping a good work ethic, and aiming for something big career-wise—as part of their successes.

"My mom … my dad, from a young age, they tell me: 'Always study, do the chores' ...[They were] teaching the foundation and values that carry throughout life," Alger said.

As pilots, they need to have a clear mind while performing their jobs in the air, and the support from their spouses and inspiration from their young children is important.

"Having the never-ending support from my wife, Tonilynn, and son, Celestino Ace, drastically reduces the stress associated with our line of work, and gives me the motivation to do my best," Aguon said.

Alger also said he draws his strength from his wife, Christina, and daughter, Liv, who keep up with the challenges of being a military family, including having to move around.

The lessons from UOG and the life lessons they picked up over the years have all combined for the two cousins to achieve their career goals even when challenges came up.

"There are times when you get knocked down, but the thing is, you learn from it; you get back up and you just try again," Alger said.

Aguon said focusing on finding solutions instead of getting stuck on setbacks can help people get through.

UOG offers advantages

He said UOG offers the advantage of not having to leave home and not having to worry about the high cost of college expenses with colleges beyond Guam.

"Attending the University of Guam is great since the cost of education is more affordable in relation to other stateside schools. I remember feeling the pressure to attend an off-island university, which would make sense if I was looking to pursue a degree that isn't offered at UOG. However, as a former merit scholar, I'm relieved that I didn't finish college with an exorbitant amount of debt and was still able to achieve my overall goal," Aguon said.

For Alger, the UOG education he received is a takeoff point for more opportunities to pursue. "Take everything you learn from UOG, apply it to your daily life, but also realize, like don't close off opportunities because you never know what pops up."***(PR)***

NOTICE OF SECOND OPEN AUCTION

2014 TOYOTA COROLLA 4DR SEDAN (Color: Red)
114,957 Miles
Condition: Fair
MINIMUM BID: $5,000.00

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres or his designee, for and on behalf of the Bank of Guam, will sell at auction the abovementioned vehicle to the highest bidder on March 1, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.
1. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conduting the auction sale:
a) withdraw the chattel mortgage (vehicle) listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such chattel mortgage (vehicle) is accepted;
b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
c) to reject any and all bids.

2. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is **$5,000.00** No advanced bids will be accepted. The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder "as is, where is" without any warranties. **Bidders must be present, in person, at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, 5962 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya on March 1, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. to bid.** All bids less than $5,000.00 will be rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a vaild identification card (vaild CNMI Driver's License or Passport). The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted.

3. Payment. The entire purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. **Personal checks /company checks are not accepted.** All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. The Bank of Guam shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder. Failure to make payment will result in the forfeiture of the accepted bid. The next highest bidder (minimum $5,000.00) may be awarded.

4. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the term conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

DATED this 3rd day of February, 2023.

/s/_____
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

NOTICE OF OPEN AUCTION

2019 KIA SOUL 5DR SEDAN HB (Color: Gray)
48,881 Miles
Condition: Poor
MINIMUM BID: $8,000.00

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres (or his designee), for and on behalf of the Bank of Guam, will sell at auction the abovementioned vehicle to the highest bidder on March 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya.

Terms and Conditions of Sale
1. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conduting the auction sale:
a) withdraw the chattel mortgage (vehicle) listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such chattel mortgage (vehicle) is accepted;
b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
c) to reject any and all bids.

2. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is **$8,000.00.** No advanced bids will be accepted. The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder "as is, where is" without any warranties. **Bidders must be present in person at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, 5962 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya at 10:00 a.m. to bid.** All bids less than $8,000.00 are rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a vaild identification card (vaild CNMI Driver's License or Passport). The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted.

3. Payment. The entire purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. **Personal checks /company checks are not accepted.** All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check only. The Bank of Guam shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder. Failure to make payment will result the winning bidder forfeiting his/her winning bid. The next highest bidder (minimum $8,000.00) may be awarded.

4. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the term conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

DATED this 3rd day of February, 2023.

/s/_____
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

NOTICE OF SECOND OPEN AUCTION

2017 MITSUBISHI LANCER 4 Door Sedan (Color: Silver)
81,515 Miles
Condition: Poor
MINIMUM BID: $4,000.00

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the undersigned counsel, Attorney Robert T. Torres or his designee, for and on behalf of the Bank of Guam, will sell at auction the abovementioned vehicle to the highest bidder on March 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya.

Terms and Conditions of Sale.
1. Rights and Duties of Auctioneer. Consistent with the custom and usage and applicable laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands governing auction sales with reserve, the auctioneer or his designee shall have the following rights and duties conduting the auction sale:
a) withdraw the chattel mortgage (vehicle) listed for sale in the public announcement before sale or before a bid for such chattel mortgage (vehicle) is accepted;
b) to adjourn the sale without notice at any time before the chattel mortgage (vehicle) is sold, without incurring any liability whatsoever there; and
c) to reject any and all bids.

2. Minimum Bid. The minimum bid for the sale of the abovementioned vehicle is **$4,000.00.** No advanced bids will be accepted. The vehicle will be sold to the highest bidder "as is, where is" without any warranties. **Bidders must be present, in person, at the Law Office of Robert T. Torres, 5962 Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya on March 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. to bid.** All bids less than $4,000.00 will be rejected. Any person who registers his/her bid shall provide a vaild identification card (vaild CNMI Driver's License or Passport). The winning bidder shall be the person whom the vehicle is confirmed to, if the bid is accepted.

3. Payment. The entire purchase price must be paid on the day of the auction sale. **Personal checks /company checks are not accepted.** All payments must be made by cash, money order, or cashier's check. The Bank of Guam shall release the chattel mortgage to the winning bidder. Failure to make payment will result in the forfeiture of the accepted bid. The next highest bidder (minimum $4,000.00) may be awarded.

4. Change of Terms. Auctioneer and the Bank of Guam reserve the right to change any of the term conducted and enforcement of sale by the announcement, written or oral, made before the auction sale or at the commencement thereof, and such change or changes, by virtue of this clause shall be binding on any buyer by the constructive notice.

DATED this 6th day of February 2023.

/s/_____
Robert T. Torres, Auctioneer

Business

Ranch BBQ Bar serves one-of-a-kind barbecue

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK RABAGO
Ranch BBQ Bar is located along Beach Road in San Antonio across the former UIC garment factory.

Ranch BBQ Bar is not your garden variety barbecue restaurant.

Opened just last November, the San Antonio restaurant serves Northeast China-style barbecue items which have unique tastes that you can't find anywhere else on Saipan.

"As barbecue is one of the most favorite food items on Saipan, we'd like to introduce some exotic and unique barbecue, which originated from Northeast China. Our cook is really experienced, and there is a greater variety of barbecue items for customers to choose from compared to other restaurants," said Na Li, who runs Ranch BBQ Bar with her husband, Owen, who is the cook.

So far, the best-selling items on its menu vary from customer to customer.

"For most Chinese and Koreans, they like our lamb, beef, scallop, and oyster barbecue. For Filipinos and locals, they like chicken, pork belly, pork intestine, gizzard, and squid barbecue. For young people, they really like to try something new, like grilled frog, chives, garlic, and bacon with mushrooms. For children, chicken wings and sausage skewers are their favorites," she said.

Ranch BBQ Bar's skewered meats are also one of a kind because of how they're prepared and cooked.

"We have different ways to marinate and cook our barbecue, which makes it exotic and unique. Aside from that, our customers can dine outdoors with music and the fresh breeze while enjoying the beautiful night scene," she said.

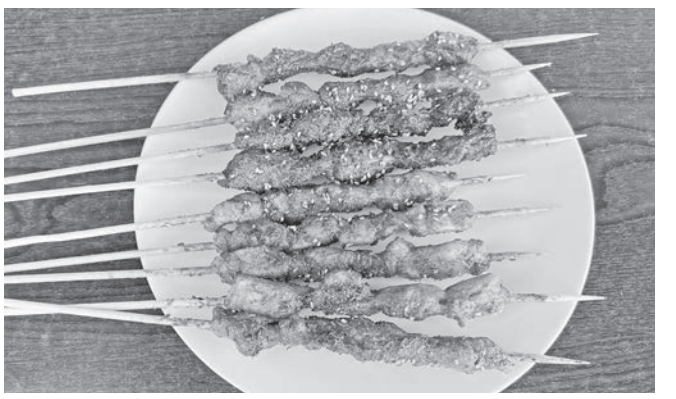
And it's not just a barbecue place alone, as Ranch BBQ Bar also offers fried noodles and rice, dumplings, wonton, lumpia and shumai. It also serves beer, soju, and wine aside from soft drinks to justify the bar in its name.

Li, who is a pre-nursing student at Northern Marianas College, said they opened Ranch BBQ Bar despite the COVID-19 pandemic because life must go on.

"Even though the pandemic impacts our economy traumatically and it is very hard to run business under this situation, we should move forward to find opportunities. Three years have passed since the pandemic began."

She said since many restaurants have either shut down or reduced their opening hours, they positioned Ranch BBQ Bar to fill the void.

"We found that some customers could not find any restaurants open after 10pm. So we made our business hours from 3:30pm to 2am. Hopefully, this would bring convenience to those people who work until the early morning."



MARK RABAGO
Ranch BBQ Bar prepares and grills high quality and fresh lamb, chicken, and beef barbecue everyday.

MARK RABAGO
Ranch BBQ Bar offers exotic and unique barbecue that originates from Northeast China.

As to why it's called Ranch BBQ Bar, Li said it refers to the freshness of the meat they serve.

"Going above and beyond to provide high quality and fresh lamb, chicken, and beef barbecue everyday is our goal. We guarantee that all the meat for barbecue is freshly prepared and marinated everyday. No old stock and we always keep the best and fresh tastes."

Ranch BBQ Bar is located along Beach Road in San Antonio across the former UIC garment factory. It has seating for up to 10 dine-in customers in its private room and 14 customers at its patio setup outside.

For more information or to order, call (670) 783-6666 or (670) 783-4444

They also accept pick-up and drive-thru orders through WhatsApp. Ranch BBQ Bar is open Monday-Sunday from 3:30pm to 2am with the last order at 1:30am.

CNMI DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

PUBLIC NOTICE

The CNMI Department of Commerce, Central Statistics Division is preparing to conduct the CNMI 2023 Prevailing Wage Study (PWS) survey to begin on March 01, 2023 and notifies all businesses and employers in the CNMI to log on to the CSD Data Collection Portal and complete the PWS survey questionnaire.

All businesses and employers (Private & Public), with and with no employees, are urged to complete this survey before March 15, 2023.

Data Collection Portal Link:
http://cnmidata.commerce.gov.mp

Name: FRANCISCA NEBRIDA HOSSAIN
Address: P.O. BOX 804
SAN JOSE, TINIAN MP 96950
Phone: (670) 783-5250

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petitioner for the Change of Name of: C.D.S.N. -INITIALS ONLY Minor Child(ren): By: FRANCISCA NEBRIDA HOSSAIN Petitioner(s)

FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0052

NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on March 17, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom Tinian Courthouse, before Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 10th day of February, 2023.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ Pearleen B. Matagolai
By: Deputy of Clerk of Court

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB23-RT-DCCA/DYS-42300033

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 27, 2023 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"Office Building/Space for DCCA, Division of Youth Services Rota"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT HORIGUCHI BLDG, GROUND FLOOR, 123 KOPPA DI ORU & BEACH ROAD, GARAPAN, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO THE ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA, VIVIAN T. SABLAN AT (670) 237-1003

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ VIVIAN T. SABLAN
ACTING SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ GERALDINE T. CRUZ
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.

Nation

EPA orders 'pause' of derailment contaminated waste removal

EAST PALESTINE, Ohio (AP)—Federal environmental authorities have ordered a temporary halt in the shipment of contaminated waste from the site of a fiery train derailment earlier this month in eastern Ohio near the Pennsylvania state line.

Region 5 administrator Debra Shore of the Environmental Protection Agency said Saturday the agency ordered Norfolk Southern to "pause" shipments from the site of the Feb. 3 derailment in East Palestine but vowed that removal of the material would resume "very soon."

"Everyone wants this contamination gone from the community. They don't want the worry, and they don't want the smell, and we owe it to the people of East Palestine to move it out of the community as quickly as possible," Shore said.

Until Friday, Shore said, the rail company had been solely responsible for the disposal of the waste and supplied Ohio environmental officials with a list of selected and utilized disposal sites. Going forward, disposal plans including locations and transportation routes for contaminated waste will be subject to EPA review and approval, she said.

"EPA will ensure that all waste is disposed of in a safe and lawful manner at EPA-certified facilities to prevent further release of hazardous substances and impacts to communities," Shore said. She said officials had heard concerns from residents and others in a number of states and were reviewing "the transport of some of this waste over long distances and finding the appropriate permitted and certified sites to take the waste."

The Ohio governor's office said Saturday night that of the twenty truckloads (approximately 280 tons) of hazardous solid waste hauled away, 15 truckloads of contaminated soil was disposed of at a Michigan hazardous waste treatment and disposal facility while five truckloads had been returned to East Palestine.

Liquid waste already trucked out of East Palestine would be disposed of at a licensed hazardous waste treatment and disposal facility in Texas, but that facility would not accept more liquid waste, the Ohio governor's office said.

"Currently, about 102,000 gallons of liquid waste and 4,500 cubic yards of solid waste remain in storage on site in East Palestine, not including the five truckloads returned to the village," the governor's office said. "Additional solid and liquid wastes are being generated as the cleanup progresses."

No one was injured when 38 Norfolk Southern cars derailed in a fiery, mangled mess on the outskirts of town, but as fears grew about a potential explosion due to hazardous chemicals in five of the rail cars, officials evacuated the area. They later opted to release and burn toxic vinyl chloride from the tanker cars, sending flames and black smoke billowing into the sky again.

Shore said the EPA was not involved in the decision to do the controlled burn, but she called it a "well-founded" decision by local and state officials based on the information they had at the time "to deal with a highly explosive toxic chemical."

Federal and state officials have repeatedly said it's safe for evacuated residents to return to the area and that air testing in the town and inside hundreds of homes hasn't detected any concerning levels of contaminants from the fires or burned chemicals. The state says the local municipal drinking water system is safe, and bottled water is available while testing is conducted for those with private wells.

Despite those assurances and a bevy of news conferences and visits from politicians, many residents still express a sense of mistrust or have lingering questions about what they have been exposed to and how it will impact the future of their families and their communities.

Los Angeles area still blanketed by snow in rare heavy storm

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A powerful winter storm that swept down the West Coast with flooding and frigid temperatures shifted its focus to southern California on Saturday, swelling rivers to dangerous levels and dropping snow in even low-lying areas around Los Angeles.

The National Weather Service said it was one of the strongest storms to ever hit southwest California and even as the volume of wind and rain dropped, it continued to have significant impact including snowfall down to elevations as low as 1,000 feet (305 meters). Hills around suburban Santa Clarita, north of Los Angeles, were blanketed in white, and snow also surprised inland suburbs to the east.

Rare blizzard warnings for the mountains and widespread flood watches were ending late in the day as the storm tapered off in the region. Forecasters said there would be a one-day respite before the next storm arrives on Monday.

After days of fierce winds, toppled trees and downed wires, more than 120,000 California utility customers remained without electricity, according to PowerOutage.us. And Interstate 5, the West Coast's major north-south highway, remained closed due to heavy snow and ice in Tejon Pass through the mountains north of Los Angeles.

Multiday precipitation totals as of Saturday morning included a staggering 81 inches (205 centimeters) of snow at the Mountain High resort in the San Gabriel Mountains northeast of Los Angeles and up to 64 inches (160 centimeters) farther east at Snow Valley in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Rainfall totals as of late Saturday morning were equally stunning, including nearly 15 inches (38.1 centimeters) at Los Angeles County's Cogswell Dam and nearly 10.5 inches (26.6 cm) in the Woodland Hills section of Los Angeles.

Five dead, including patient, in medical flight crash in Nevada

STAGECOACH, Nev. (AP)—All five people aboard a medical transport flight, including a patient, were killed in a plane crash Friday night in a mountainous area in northern Nevada.

The Lyon County Sheriff's office said authorities began receiving calls about the crash near Stagecoach, Nevada, around 9:15 p.m. and found the wreckage two hours later. Stagecoach, a rural community home to around 2,500 residents, is about 45 miles (72 kilometers) southeast of Reno.

Care Flight, which provides ambulance service by plane and helicopter, said the dead included the pilot, a flight nurse, a flight paramedic, a patient and a patient's family member.

Barry Duplantis, president and CEO of the company, said Saturday afternoon that relatives of all five victims had been notified, the Reno Gazette Journal reported. "We send our deepest condolences to their families," Duplantis said.

The crash occurred amid a winter storm warning issued by the National Weather Service in Reno for large swaths of Nevada, including parts of Lyon County.

The weather service said it was expecting heavy snow, wind gusts of up to 65 mph (105 kph) and periods of white-out conditions between 4 a.m. Friday and 4 a.m. Sunday.

"It's a pretty mountainous region," Lyon County Sgt. Nathan Cooper said. "Especially with the weather being the way it is right now, it's not very good."

The National Transportation Safety Board said Saturday morning on Twitter that it is sending a seven-member team of investigators to the crash site. The NTSB is expected release more information Sunday at a news conference.

Care Flight identified the downed aircraft as a Pilatus PC-12 airplane. Federal Aviation Administration records show the aircraft was manufactured in 2002.

The company said in a statement that it is halting flights to focus on helping responding agencies, team members and the families.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

MVA-RFP-23-2030

Marianas Visitors Authority Office Space Lease

Submission /Closing Date: March 10, 2023 Time: 3:00PM ChST
Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
Attn: Procurement Office
Gold Beach Hotel
Beach Rd., Garapan
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the RFP package on or after February 22, 2023 at the Marianas Visitors Authority Office, Gold Beach Hotel, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, during the hours of 8:00AM to 5:00PM ChST, Monday through Friday, except holidays. The RFP package can be emailed to anyone interested. The request via email must reference **"MVA - RFP -23- 2030- MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY OFFICE SPACE LEASE".**

Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified Courier mail service on or before March 10, 2023 and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the CNMI must notify the MVA Procurement Officer Mr. George A. Sablan in writing of their intent to submit in order to receive the additional seven (7) working days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. This notice of intent may be submitted by any mode of written communication including facsimile to +1-670-664-3237 or emailed to gsablan@mymarianas.com and must be received no later than 3:00PM, Chamorro Standard Time (ChST) on March 10, 2023.

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Acting Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

/s/ Judy C. Torres
Managing Director, MVA (Acting)

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:	Opening Date	Closing Date
2023-010	CDBG-DR Compliance Specialist (1-Position)	UNGRADED $25,000.00 to $30,000.00 Per annum	Feb. 15, 2023	March 2, 2023 4:00 PM

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information can be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net and www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; the CDBG-DR Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Ladera Building, Chalan Laulau, Beach Road; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre- employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp | Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
NMHC IFB 2023-005

(This ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME: March 07, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Purchase of Wildland Fire Truck for the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS)

The IFB packet is available on February 17, 2023, at the NMHC website at www.nmhcgov.net by clicking on the "Procurement Tab".

Inquiries regarding this solicitation must be address in writing to Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer at P.O. Box 500514, Saipan MP 96950; email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net or fax to (670) 234-9021, no later than 10:00 a.m. February 22, 2023.

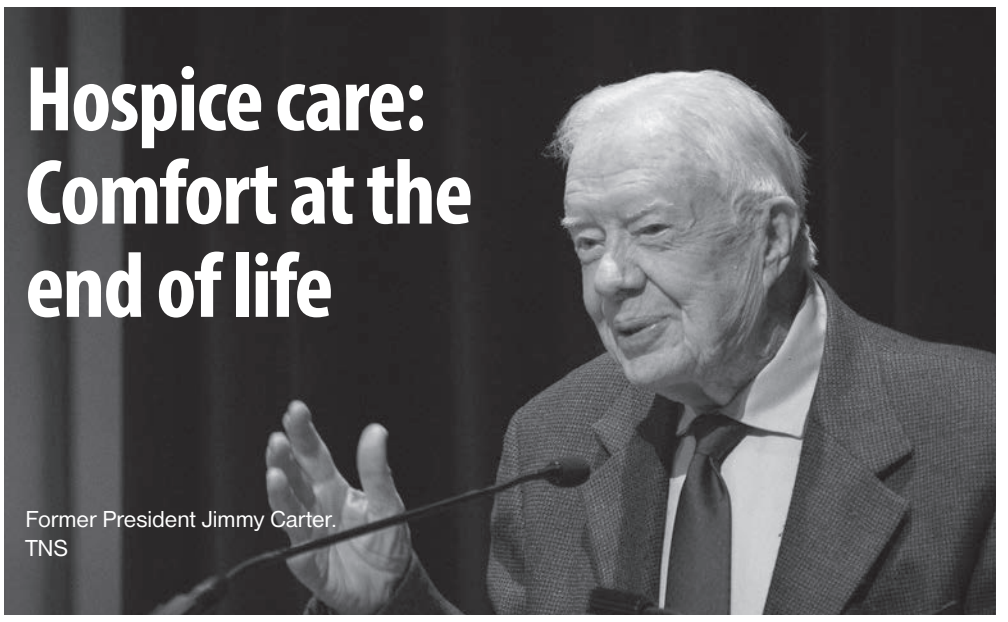
The provisions of the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)

/s/ MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

Health & Wellness



Hospice care: Comfort at the end of life

Former President Jimmy Carter. TNS

By DANA SPARKS
MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK

It was announced earlier this week that former President Jimmy Carter has entered hospice care. But just what is hospice care and how it can provide comfort and support?

Hospice care is for people who are nearing the end of life. The services are provided by a team of health care professionals who maximize comfort for a person who is terminally ill by reducing pain and addressing physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs. To help families, hospice care also provides counseling, respite care and practical support.

Unlike other medical care, the focus of hospice care isn't to cure the underlying disease. The goal is to support the highest quality of life possible for whatever time remains.

Who can benefit from hospice care?

Hospice care is for a terminally ill person who's expected to have six months or less to live. But hospice care can be provided for as long as the person's doctor and hospice care team certify that the condition remains life-limiting.

Many people who receive hospice care have cancer, while others have other serious or advanced medical conditions such as heart disease, dementia, kidney failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Enrolling in hospice care early can help you live better. Hospice care decreases the burden on family, decreases the family's likelihood of having a complicated grief and prepares family members for their loved one's death. Hospice also allows a patient to be cared for at a facility for a period of time, not because the patient needs it, but because the family caregiver needs a break. This is known as respite care.

Where is hospice care provided?

Most hospice care is provided at home—with a family member typically serving as the primary caregiver. However, hospice care is also available at hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities and dedicated hospice facilities.

Who's involved in hospice care?

If you're not receiving hospice care at a dedicated facility, hospice staff will make regular visits to your home or other setting. Hospice staff is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A hospice care team typically includes:

■ Doctors. A primary care doctor and a hospice doctor or medical director will oversee care. Each patient can choose to have their prior primary care doctor or a hospice doctor as their main physician.

■ Nurses. Nurses will come to your or your relative's home or other setting to provide care. They are also responsible for coordination of the hospice care team.

■ Home health aides. Home health aides can provide extra support for routine care, such as dressing, bathing and eating.

■ Spiritual counselors. Chaplains, priests, lay ministers or other spiritual counselors can provide spiritual care and guidance for the entire family.

■ Social workers. Social workers provide counseling and support. They can also provide referrals to other support systems.

■ Pharmacists. Pharmacists provide medication oversight and suggestions regarding the most effective ways to relieve symptoms.

■ Volunteers. Trained volunteers offer a variety of services, including providing company or respite for caregivers and helping with transportation or other practical needs.

■ Other professionals. Speech, physical and occupational therapists can provide therapy, if needed.

■ Bereavement counselors. Trained bereavement counselors offer support and guidance after the death of a loved one in hospice.

How is hospice care financed?

Medicare, Medicaid, the Department of Veterans Affairs and private insurance typically pay for hospice care. While each hospice program has its own policy regarding payment for care, services are often offered based on need rather than the ability to pay. Ask about payment options before choosing a hospice program.

How do I select a hospice program?

To find out about hospice programs, talk to doctors, nurses, social workers or counselors, or contact your local or state office on aging. Consider asking friends or neighbors for advice. The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization also offers an online provider directory.

To evaluate a hospice program, consider asking:

■ Is the hospice program Medicare-certified? Is the program reviewed and licensed by the state or certified in some other way? Is the hospice program accredited by The Joint Commission?

■ Who makes up the hospice care team, and how are they trained or screened? Is the hospice medical director board certified in hospice and palliative care medicine?

■ Is the hospice program not-for-profit or for profit?

■ Does the hospice program have a dedicated pharmacist to help adjust medications?

■ Is residential hospice available?

■ What services are offered to a person who is terminally ill? How are pain and other symptoms managed?

■ How are hospice care services provided after hours?

■ How long does it take to get accepted into the hospice care program?

■ What services are offered to the family? What respite services are available for the caregiver or caregivers? What bereavement services are available?

■ Are volunteer services available?

■ If circumstances change, can services be provided in different settings? Does the hospice have contracts with local nursing homes?

■ Are hospice costs covered by insurance or other sources, such as Medicare?

■ Remember, hospice stresses care over cure. The goal is to provide comfort during the final months and days of life.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
P.O. BOX 500861 CK
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL: (670) 664-3200/1
FAX: (670) 664-3237
info@mymarianas.com
www.mymarianas.com
The Marianas

REGULAR BOARD MEETING NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Marianas Visitors Authority hereby gives notice that a **Regular Board of Directors Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.** at the **MVA Conference Room.**

MEETING AGENDA

1) **Preliminary Matters**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes
      i. Regular Board Meeting – February 7, 2023
2) **Public Comments**
3) **Committee Reports**
   a. Finance Committee
      i. Fund Status
      ii. Funding Reallocation
   b. Ad-Hoc Committee Update
4) **New Business**
   a. Japan Marianas Seminar/Webinar
   b. Market Report - Australia
   c. Comments on SB 23-02: To amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance the Marianas Visitors Authority's promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
   d. Existing Contracts
      i. MVA-CT-21-2028: Research Scanner System - A&P LLC dba AP Solutions – No Cost Extension
      ii. MVA – CT- 22-2049: Safety Video Airtime Services – No Renewal Option
      iii. MVA – CT-22-2044: Garapan Trash Collection & Ground Maintenance Services – Renewal Option
5) **Executive Session**
6) **Miscellaneous/Announcements**
   a. Next Regular Board Meeting
   b. Others
7) **Adjournment**

/s/ Gloria Cavanagh
Acting Chairperson, MVA Board of Directors

ON NUTRITION

Readers ask about cheese, grapes

By BARBARA INTERMILL
Tribune News Service

Barbara Intermill is a registered dietitian nutritionist and syndicated columnist. She is the author of Quinn-Essential Nutrition: The Uncomplicated Science of Eating. *Email her at barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com.*

Wendy M from Tucson, Arizona, writes: "I have recently read that a study has concluded that cheese does not raise cholesterol levels. So is it now OK to eat as much cheese (read: pizza) as we want?"

I'm not sure I have the answer to that question yet, Wendy. But some surprising results about the health effects of cheese (and other high-fat dairy foods) have surfaced from recent research.

Cheese is high in saturated fat, which is generally associated with higher cholesterol levels. Yet some studies have found that a higher intake of cheese actually lowered cholesterol.

A 2015 Swedish study published in the journal Food & Nutrition Research, for example, compared the health effects of three diets: one that included high-fat Gouda cheese; one with a fat- and salt-free traditional Norwegian cheese called Gamalost; and a control group with limited cheese intake.

After eight weeks, the researchers found no differences in cholesterol levels between the high- or low-fat cheese diets compared to the control group. Most intriguing was the people in the trial with metabolic syndrome who ate the high-fat cheese diet had significantly lower cholesterol levels at the end of the study. (Metabolic syndrome is a risk factor for Type 2 diabetes.)

Cheese is high in saturated fat, which is generally associated with higher cholesterol levels. Yet some studies have found that a higher intake of cheese actually lowered cholesterol.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A 2021 technical review of this phenomenon in the International Journal of Dairy Technology states: "Current research suggests that for dairy foods and cheese in particular, a matrix effect exists, whereby the other components present interact with the overall structure, leading to health benefits." Stay tuned.

Another reader asks: "Where do you get Concord grapes to make jelly with? I've been looking for Concord grapes for years and only find green or purple. I tried the purple but they were nothing like Concord. Thanks.—Dan"

Here's what I learned from the Concord Grape Association. Concord grapes are a type of purple grape native to North America. This variety has a thicker "slip skin" that separates easily from the fruit. So when you squeeze a Concord grape, the pulp easily slips out of the skin.

That's why most Concords are used for juices, jams and jellies. "Table grapes" we buy in the store are usually varieties with skin more firmly attached to the grape. They are easier than Concords to store and transport.

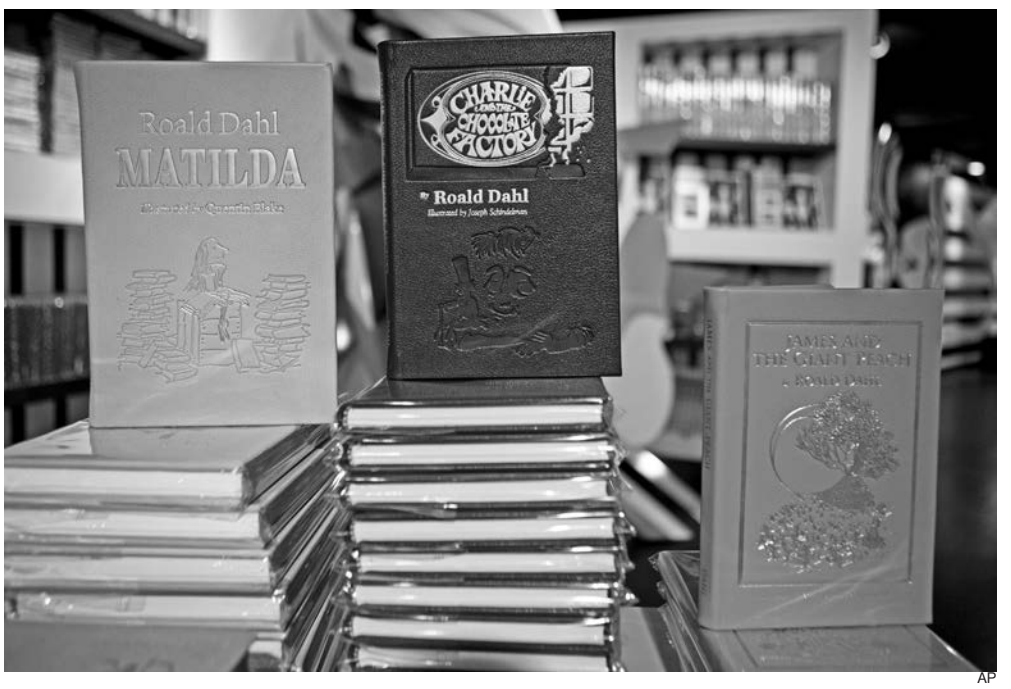
Life & Style

Penguin to publish 'classic' Roald Dahl books after backlash

LONDON (AP)—Publisher Penguin Random House announced Friday it will publish "classic" unexpurgated versions of Roald Dahl's children's novels after it received criticism for cuts and rewrites that were intended to make the books suitable for modern readers.

Along with the new editions, the company said 17 of Dahl's books would be published in their original form later this year as "The Roald Dahl Classic Collection" so "readers will be free to choose which version of Dahl's stories they prefer."

The move comes after criticism of scores of changes made to "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and other much-loved classics for recent editions published under the company's Puffin children's label, in which passages relating to weight, mental health, gender and race were altered.



AP

Books by Roald Dahl are displayed at the Barney's store on East 60th Street in New York on Monday, Nov. 21, 2011.

Augustus Gloop, Charlie's gluttonous antagonist in "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"—originally published in 1964—became "enormous" rather than "enormously fat." In "Witches," an "old hag" became an "old crow," and a supernatural female posing as an ordinary woman may be a "top scientist or running a business" instead of a "cashier in a supermarket or typing letters for a businessman."

In "Fantastic Mr. Fox," the word "black" was removed from a description of the "murderous, brutal-looking" tractors.

The Roald Dahl Story Company, which controls the rights to the books, said it had worked with Puffin to review and revise the texts because it wanted to ensure that "Dahl's wonderful stories and characters continue to be enjoyed by all children today."

While tweaking old books for modern sensibilities is not a new phenomenon in publishing, the scale of the edits drew strong criticism from free-speech groups such as writers' organization PEN America, and from authors including Salman Rushdie.

Rushdie, who lived under threat of death from Iran's Islamic regime for years because of the alleged blasphemy of his novel "The Satanic Verses," called the revisions "absurd censorship."

Rushdie, who was attacked and seriously injured last year at an event in New York state, tweeted news of Penguin's change of heart on Friday with the words "Penguin Books back down after Roald Dahl backlash!"

PEN America chief executive Suzanne Nossel wrote on Twitter: "I applaud Penguin for hearing out critics, taking the time to rethink this, and coming to the right place."

Camilla, Britain's queen consort, appeared to offer her view at a literary reception on Thursday. She urged writers to "remain true to your calling, unimpeded by those who may wish to curb the freedom of your expression or impose limits on your imagination."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Netflix cuts prices in some markets to lure more subscribers

Netflix is cutting its prices in several of its smaller markets in the latest twist on the video streaming service's efforts to keep its recently revived subscriber growth rolling amid stiffer competition and inflation pressures that are pushing more households to curb their discretionary spending. The lower prices that began to roll out earlier this week affect more than 30 of the roughly 190 countries where Netflix's steaming service is available—an expanse that has enabled the company to attract nearly 231 million subscribers. The areas getting lower prices include Middle East markets in Yemen, Jordan, Libya and Iran; European countries such as Croatia, Slovenia and Bulgaria, and sub-Saharan African markets. Netflix isn't changing its prices in any of its largest markets, including the U.S., where it has been regularly increasing its rates during the past four years to help offset the cost of an programming lineup that includes popular series such as "The Crown" and "Stranger Things." ***(AP)***

Jonas Brothers announce new album, Broadway shows in March

Jonas Brothers have released a new single and revealed an upcoming album and plans to hit Broadway for five shows next month. Kevin, Nick and Joe Jonas announced Friday they'll use each night at the Marquis Theatre to focus on a different album, including "Jonas Brothers," "A Little Bit Longer," "Lines, Vines and Trying Times," "Happiness Begins" and their upcoming collection due in May, simply called "The Album." They are scheduled to be on Broadway from March 14-18. The brothers released the song "Wings" from "The Album," which is being executive produced by Jon Bellion. Nick Jonas is no stranger to Broadway, having starred in "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" in 2012, as well as roles in "Annie Get Your Gun," "Beauty and the Beast" and "Les Misérables." He and his wife, Priyanka Chopra Jonas, helped produce the short-lived 2021 play "Chicken & Biscuits." ***(AP)***

Harvey Weinstein gets 16 more years for rape, sexual assault

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Los Angeles judge on Thursday sentenced Harvey Weinstein to 16 more years in prison after a jury convicted him of the rape and sexual assault of an Italian actor and model, furthering the fall of the one-time movie magnate who became a #MeToo magnet.

The prison term, along with the 23 years he received in 2020 for a similar conviction in New York, amounts to a likely life sentence for the 70-year-old. Weinstein, sitting in a wheelchair and wearing jail attire, directly appealed to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Lisa B. Lench, saying: "I maintain that I'm innocent. I never raped or sexually assaulted Jane Doe 1. " The woman who Weinstein was convicted of raping sobbed in the courtroom as he spoke. Moments earlier she had told the judge about the pain she felt after being attacked by Weinstein. "Before that night I was a very happy and confident woman. I valued myself and the relationship I had with God," the woman, who was identified in court only as Jane Doe 1, said through tears as she stood at a lectern behind prosecutors.

Husband keeps whole world updated on spouse's health

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I have been married more than 30 years. In the last five, I have had so many doctor appointments, medical procedures and surgeries that I have lost count. My husband thinks it is perfectly fine to tell family, friends and strangers about my medical conditions, tests and surgeries.

I asked a friend if she would pray for an upcoming test. She said she would, and would continue to pray until I told her otherwise. I had the test; the results were great. My husband told my friend the results without first asking me if it was OK. I realized it when she said, "Your husband told me the good news."

Now, Abby, I understand it was good news but, in my opinion, it was MY medical information and I had planned to tell her the next time I saw her, which was three days after the test. My husband thinks it's "no big deal" to tell people about what's going on with me medically. I disagree! I believe it's personal and nobody's business.

I have asked, even begged, my husband not to tell anyone about my medical stuff. I went so far as to go to two appointments without telling him. He was furious that I didn't let him come along. I told him why he was left behind, but he still didn't get it, or maybe, didn't think my feelings were important. Am I being too sensitive or should he keep his mouth shut?

VIOLATED IN ARKANSAS

DEAR VIOLATED: Your oversharing husband should respect your feelings and keep his mouth shut. You shouldn't have had to beg him not to discuss your medical information with others. Would he be equally open to your telling folks about the state of his prostate, his Viagra consumption, his colonoscopy preps? Perhaps he will get the message if you start giving him a dose of his own medicine. It's worth a try.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I decided to get my daughter a birthday gift that would help her to relax. She is a nurse. Because she worked so hard through the pandemic, I thought a massage would be a good idea. I enlisted the help of her daughter and boyfriend to help pay for it. I work part-time and couldn't manage it without their help.

I chose the business after reviewing it online and fronted the money to get a certificate in time for her birthday. More than a month has gone by, and I still haven't received their share of the money from my granddaughter or her boyfriend. In fact, I'm now being ghosted after texting requests for what's owed.

I'm not sure what to do. I'm considering dropping it so my daughter doesn't find out. But I'm angry about getting hurt in this way. Both parties work. I don't understand the treatment I'm getting. Please advise.

DISAPPOINTED IN ILLINOIS

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR DISAPPOINTED: You may have to chalk this up to a life lesson. You have learned that your granddaughter and her boyfriend (who I assume are self-supporting) can't be trusted to honor their word. I do not think you should tattle to your daughter about this. The distress it could cause would be counterproductive to the intent of your gift.

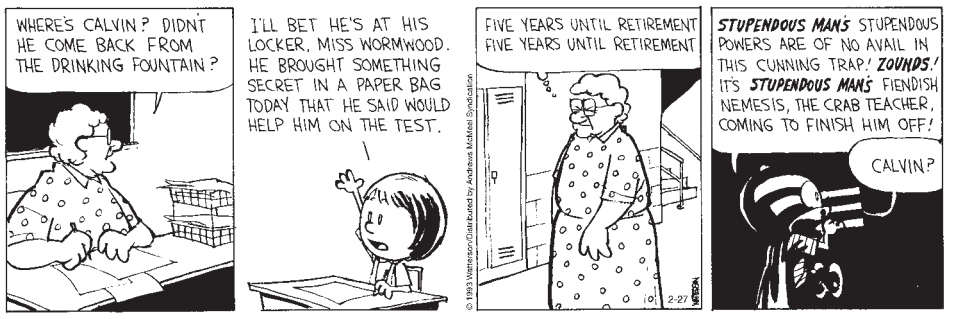
■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

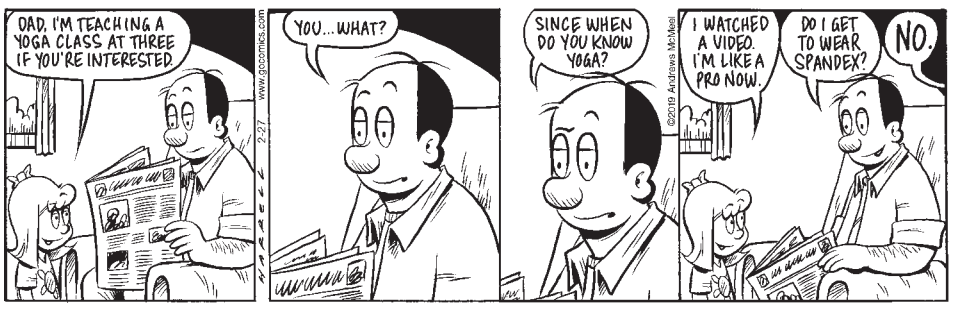

WHERE'S CALVIN? DIDN'T HE COME BACK FROM THE DRINKING FOUNTAIN?
I'LL BET HE'S AT HIS LOCKER, MISS WORMWOOD. HE BROUGHT SOMETHING SECRET IN A PAPER BAG TODAY THAT HE SAID WOULD HELP HIM ON THE TEST.
FIVE YEARS UNTIL RETIREMENT
FIVE YEARS UNTIL RETIREMENT
STUPENDOUS MAN'S STUPENDOUS POWERS ARE OF NO AVAIL IN THIS CUNNING TRAP! ZOUNDS! IT'S STUPENDOUS MAN'S FIENDISH NEMESIS, THE CRAB TEACHER, COMING TO FINISH HIM OFF!
CALVIN?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset


DAD, I'M TEACHING A YOGA CLASS AT THREE IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.
YOU... WHAT?
SINCE WHEN DO YOU KNOW YOGA?
I WATCHED A VIDEO. I'M LIKE A PRO NOW.
DO I GET TO WEAR SPANDEX?
NO.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Roots" author Haley
5 TV alien
8 Days gone by
12 Wooing type
14 Wicked
15 Agree
16 Clothing store section
17 Succor
18 Come out
20 Paper ballot pieces
23 Humorist Lebowitz
24 Video-streaming site
25 "Hamlet" actor Laurence
28 "— Believer"
29 Apple tablets
30 Mojito ingredient
32 Mentored one
34 WNBA star Leslie
35 Head shop purchase
36 Roused
37 Laid-back
40 Jazzy style
41 Medley
42 Raymond Burr TV role
47 Farm structure
48 Greek philosopher
49 Hose woe
50 Very long time
51 Ooze

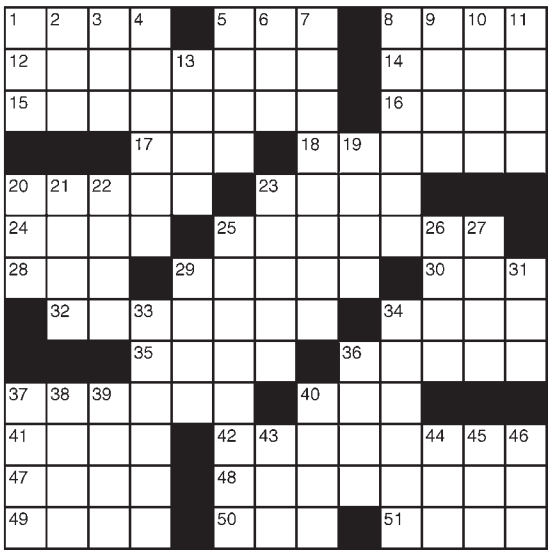
DOWN

1 Curved line
2 Privy
3 Brit. record label
4 Citizen Kane's estate
5 Battery fluid
6 Went first
7 Easy treatment
8 Saudi neighbor
9 Done with
10 Engagement gift
11 Otherwise
13 Mark Harmon TV series
19 Dallas team, to fans
20 Greek letter
21 Camel feature
22 Winged
23 Actress/author Fannie
25 Dentist's directive
26 Composer Satie
27 Stratagem
29 Langston Hughes poem
31 Frenzied
33 Eclair's shape
34 Expires
36 "Mr. Robot" actor BD —
37 Unruly groups
38 Flair
39 Turkish money
40 Benefit
43 2016 Olympics city
44 Chemical suffix
45 Billy — Williams
46 Kreskin's claim

Solution time: 26 mins.

U	S	A	■	U	R	L	S	■	T	H	E	M
G	I	N	■	S	U	I	T	■	H	E	X	A
H	A	N	D	H	E	L	D	■	R	I	P	S
■	■	■	A	Y	E	S	■	E	U	R	O	S
R	A	R	E	R	■	B	I	N	S	■	■	■
O	R	B	S	■	H	E	A	D	H	O	M	E
T	I	O	■	T	E	E	M	S	■	V	E	Y
H	A	R	D	H	A	T	S	■	W	E	R	E
■	■	■	O	I	L	S	■	B	A	R	E	D
A	L	I	G	N	■	■	B	O	S	C	■	■
R	O	O	M	■	H	U	L	A	H	O	O	P
A	G	U	A	■	E	R	O	S	■	A	W	E
B	E	S	S	■	M	I	T	T	■	T	L	C

Last Friday's Answer 02/27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Josh Groban, 42; Nikki Amuka-Bird, 47; Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas, 52; Donal Logue, 57.

Happy Birthday: You'll be met with some opposition. Don't let anger make matters worse. Step back, assess your situations and options, take your time and choose reason over desire. Your success depends on intelligence, preparation and simplicity. Channel your emotions into love and romance. Build strong relationships, and put your energy into gaining knowledge and skills that help you surpass your expectations. Your numbers are 8, 12, 24, 29, 31, 36, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19)*: Stretch your mind, consider the possibilities and come up with a plan that can help you get ahead financially. Give your all physically, mentally and emotionally, and you will find your niche and enjoy the process. A romantic gesture will touch you emotionally. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20)*: You'll be put in a difficult position if you are too compliant. Pick and choose what you are willing to do and refuse to let anyone put you in an uncomfortable position. Offer what you can do, nothing more, and you'll stop others from taking advantage of you. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*: Share your thoughts and feelings. Look for any opportunity to pitch in and help. Having an innovative plan, discipline and skill will increase your profile. Don't believe everything you hear; go directly to the source to stop someone from misleading you. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22)*: Don't stand in someone's shadow; explore possibilities in order to discover that you can do more. Head to the drawing board, figure out what you want to do and get the ball rolling. Sign up for whatever courses or credits you need. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22)*: Get involved in something that motivates you to make a difference. The people you meet will light up your life and contribute to how you live. The amount you grow emotionally will help you appreciate what you have and who you are. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)*: An emotional issue will collide with your responsibilities. Make changes on the fly to accommodate those who can influence your reputation or status quo. Bending to fit circumstances will show your ability to make things work, regardless of what's going on around you. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)*: Participate in whatever sparks your interest. Getting out, socializing, learning something new or visiting a place you've never been will help you figure out what you want to pursue next. Love is in the stars, and the opportunity to improve your life looks promising. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)*: Go about your business and honor your promises. You'll avoid criticism from someone who can make or break your spirit. Take the road less traveled if it helps you avoid an argument or joint venture. Focus on saving, not taking on additional debt. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)*: Address domestic issues openly and enforce suggestions that ease tension and make your living arrangements workable. Keeping updated with the latest technology or work aids that come along will pay off. Discuss personal intentions with someone you love. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)*: Don't sell yourself short. Speak up, follow through and make a difference. Be concerned about your health; choose a fitness program that helps eliminate any bad habits you've adopted over the years. Lower your overhead with a lifestyle change. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)*: You know what you want; figure out the easiest way to make it happen. Put pressure on people and situations that need a nudge. You will get the help required to use your space, skills and knowledge to improve your life. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20)*: Emotional manipulation will make it easy to get what you want, but recognize how others react to your pleas before you decide to take that route. Your highest return will come from kindness and doing something nice for someone you love. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are sassy, charming and outspoken. You are entertaining and sensitive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	3						2	
					7		4	1
			4				3	9
	4	1	7				9	6
3	6		9	5		4		
	2	8			4	1	5	7
	7	9			8			
4	8	3	2		6	9		5
		2	1	9				4

Difficulty: ★ 2-27

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Friday's Answer

3	8	6	1	7	9	4	5	2
1	9	7	2	5	4	8	3	6
4	2	5	8	3	6	7	1	9
6	5	3	7	8	1	2	9	4
2	7	8	9	4	3	5	6	1
9	4	1	6	2	5	3	7	8
5	6	4	3	1	2	9	8	7
7	3	9	4	6	8	1	2	5
8	1	2	5	9	7	6	4	3

Difficulty: ★★★★ 2-24

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

IT'S A NO-BRAINER Solution: 6 letters

B	O	U	N	D	A	R	Y	B	B	O	H	I	K	E
A	R	E	C	L	I	N	E	E	B	R	A	I	N	R
L	S	E	Y	L	I	M	A	F	T	F	N	J	W	U
A	L	O	A	C	N	C	S	O	O	O	O	O	O	T
N	E	U	L	T	H	A	Y	S	T	Y	Y	U	D	A
C	E	T	A	U	H	S	E	E	E	A	O	R	W	N
E	P	L	U	S	T	E	S	L	L	C	G	Ⓝ	O	R
E	I	O	G	T	H	I	B	P	C	A	A	Ⓐ	L	E
T	N	O	H	E	M	A	O	W	H	R	W	Ⓛ	S	T
A	O	K	A	P	E	I	A	N	I	D	A	Ⓟ	E	T
T	I	R	L	G	S	L	O	I	S	S	R	C	I	U
I	T	E	A	E	K	K	S	A	T	I	D	Y	V	L
D	C	N	O	I	T	I	U	T	N	I	E	O	O	C
E	A	P	P	R	E	C	I	A	T	E	G	A	M	E
M	I	N	D	S	E	T	N	O	I	S	I	C	E	D

© 2023 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 2/27

Action, Appreciate, Balance, Beach, Boundary, Brain, Breathe, Cards, Clean, Decision, Declutter, Draw, Easy, Enjoy, Family, Game, Heart, Hike, Hobby, Intuition, Journal, Laugh, Manageable, Meditate, Mindset, Movie, Nature, Notes, Outlook, Pets, Plan, Play, Poise, Recline, Simple, Sleep In, Slow Down, Sofa, Solutions, Task, Tidy, Toys, Walk, Wisdom, Yoga

Last Friday's Answer: Journeyman

The NEW **Volume 70** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Morant, Grizzlies beat Nuggets in matchup of West leaders

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Ja Morant had 23 points and seven rebounds as the Memphis Grizzlies raced to an early lead and coasted to a 112-94 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Saturday night in a matchup of the Western Conference's top teams.

Tyus Jones finished with 17 points, and Luke Kennard, Xavier Tillman and Dillon Brooks scored 12 apiece for Memphis, which trails Denver by six games in the conference race.

Nikola Jokic led the Nuggets with 15 points and 13 rebounds, and Jeff Green added 12 points. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope and Christian Braun each scored 11 points as Denver's four-game winning streak came to an end. Denver was hampered by a 40% shooting game. The Nuggets' starters were 17 of 47 from the field in the game.

Denver's 94 total points was a season low.

AP

Memphis Grizzlies guard Ja Morant (12) shoots against Denver Nuggets guard Kentavious Caldwell-Pope (5) in the second half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023, in Memphis, Tenn.

CELTICS 110, 76ERS 107

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Jayson Tatum buried a go-ahead 3-pointer for Boston with 1.3 seconds left, Joel Embiid didn't get his desperation heave off in time to tie and the Celtics held on to beat Philadelphia.

Tatum finished with 18 points, 13 rebounds and six assists. Jaylen Brown scored 26 points and Derrick White added 18 for the Celtics.

Embiid finished with 41 points and 12 rebounds. James Harden scored 21 points and Tobias Harris had 19.

The late-game thriller proved worthy of a showdown between two of the top teams in the East. Boston, though, proved it's still the team to beat.

HORNETS 108, HEAT 103

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Gordon Hayward scored 21 points, rookie center Mark Williams posted career highs with 18 points and 20 rebounds and surging Charlotte beat Miami for its season-best fourth straight win.

LaMelo Ball had 16 of his 19 points in the second half and finished with 13 assists for his sixth straight double-double. Kelly Oubre Jr. and Dennis Smith Jr. each had 15 points off the bench for the Hornets.

Tyler Herro had 33 points on six 3-pointers and Jimmy Butler added 28 points as Miami lost its fourth straight. Kevin Love had 13 points and 13 rebounds in his second game since joining the Heat.

JAZZ 118, SPURS 102

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Lauri Markkanen scored 27 points and recent signee Kris Dunn added 15 as Utah rallied from a 14-point deficit and beat struggled San Antonio.

Markkanen sealed the game with 14 points in the fourth quarter, and Walker Kessler recorded four of his five blocks in the final minutes. Kessler added 12 rebounds and nine points.

Jeremy Sochan scored 22 points, Keldon Johnson had 18 and Zach Collins added 15 for the Spurs, who lost their 16th straight game.

KNICKS 128, PELICANS 106

NEW YORK (AP)—Julius Randle scored 28 points to lead New York to a rout of New Orleans as the Knicks celebrated the golden anniversary of their 1972-73 NBA championship team.

Six players scored in double figures for New York, which won its fifth straight. R.J. Barrett had 25 points and a season-high seven assists. Jalen Brunson added 20 points, Josh Hart scored 15 points, Immanuel Quickley added 13, and Mitchell Robinson finished with a double-double of 11 points and 13 rebounds.

Brandon Ingram scored 19 points for the Pelicans, who lost their third straight and fourth in five games overall. Josh Richardson added 16 points, C.J. McCollum finished with 13 and Jonas Valanciunas had 12 points and 10 rebounds. Trey Murphy III scored 11 off the bench.

PACERS 121, MAGIC 108

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Myles Turner scored 24 points, Tyrese Haliburton had 15 points and 14 assists and Indiana ran away from Orlando in the second half.

Indiana shot 59% in the second half and won for the fourth time in 21 games.

Bennedict Mathurin scored 19 points and Jordan Nwora had 18, both off the bench for the Pacers, while Jalen Smith added seven rebounds and five blocks.

Franz Wagner led Orlando with 21 points. Paolo Banchero scored 19 points and Markelle Fultz 18. The Magic struggled with their shooting, going 6 for 29 from 3-point range and finished the game at 38.9% overall.

RAPTORS 95, PISTONS 91

DETROIT (AP)—Pascal Siakam had 29 points and eight rebounds and Toronto extended its winning streak to four games with a win over Detroit.

Gary Trent Jr. scored 19 points and Scottie Barnes added 12, all in the second half, as the Raptors won for the seventh time in eight games. Precious Achiuwa chipped in 10 points off the bench.

Detroit's Marvin Bagley III had a season-high 21 points and 18 rebounds in his first game since fracturing his right hand on Jan. 2. Isaiah Livers, Hamidou Diallo and Bojan Bogdanovic had 11 points apiece for the Pistons, who lost their fourth straight.

Westbrook goes from Lakers' bench to being Clippers' starter

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Russell Westbrook not only switched locker rooms at Crypto.com Arena. He went from being on the bench to a return to the starting lineup.

Los Angeles Clippers coach Tyronn Lue didn't waste much time seeing how well Westbrook would mesh with his new team. The eight-time All-Star signed after he cleared waivers on Wednesday and was the starting point guard Friday night in a game against the Sacramento Kings.

Westbrook's Clippers debut was overshadowed in what ended up being the second-highest-scoring game in NBA history. He had 17 points, 14 assists and five rebounds in 39 minutes during the Clippers' 176-175 loss to the Kings in double overtime.

"It was great to get back on the floor. Obviously, you want to win and that's the most important part," said Westbrook, who fouled out with 1:49 remaining in the second overtime.

Lue was pleased with Westbrook's debut despite him having only two practices with the Clippers before the game. Westbrook was waived by Utah on Monday after being traded to the Jazz by the Lakers on Feb. 9.

"I thought he was great. Still learning the offense, still learning where guys like the basketball and where to get the ball," Lue said. "He knew PG's (Paul George's) plays and Kawhi's (Leonard) plays, that's the most important thing, and he picked up on those right away."

Westbrook quickly fit in by pushing the pace and finding his new teammates. He was the first Clippers player to have at least 10 assists in his team debut since 2005.

Of Westbrook's 14 assists, Leonard was the biggest beneficiary. Leonard scored 13 of his season-high 44 points off passes from Westbrook, including three 3-pointers.

Norman Powell had three catch-and-shoot 3-pointers, but Westbrook also had to work it inside, finding Mason Plumlee inside for three easy baskets.

George, the biggest supporter of Westbrook joining the Clippers, said it was quickly apparent that Westbrook filled an immediate need.

"We needed a point guard. What you saw tonight: somebody to get us on offense and someone to get us easy baskets," said George, who played with Westbrook for two seasons in Oklahoma City. "I know his strengths. If you run with him, he will make the game easier for us."

Westbrook was 7 of 13 shooting. Most of his attempts were drives in the paint (6 of 9) instead of pullup jumpers, which defined his 1 1/2 seasons with the Lakers. He missed his first three 3-point attempts before making one in the corner in the first overtime.

For all the positive flashes that Westbrook showed, there are things he still needs to clean up with his game. There were seven turnovers, with four attributed to bad passes. He got crossed up on defense late in regulation when Malik Monk hit a 3-pointer with 1.1 seconds remaining in regulation to force overtime.

The Clippers will need Westbrook to continue to get up to speed with only 20 games remaining in the regular season. Los Angeles is fifth in the Western Conference with a 33-29 record but only two games in front of the pack in the play-in tournament spots.

"I think it's going to be just learning as we go through the process," Lue said. "We don't have a lot of time to really experiment, because we've still got to win games. We have to make sure we take advantage of everything we can so we can get up to speed."

Hawks' Young expresses 'love and respect' for fired McMillan

ATLANTA (AP)—Trae Young says he has "nothing but love and respect" for former Atlanta Hawks coach Nate McMillan and expects to have no input in the hiring of McMillan's replacement.

Young spoke with reporters on Friday for the first time since McMillan was fired on Tuesday with the Hawks in eighth place in the Eastern Conference. Young was not available following Wednesday's practice and was excused from Thursday's practice for personal reasons.

Young is preparing for his third full-time coach in five seasons. Asked if he is worried another change impacts the perception of his ability to maintain long relationships with coaches, Young said "People are going to say what they've got to say.

"A lot of players have played for a lot of coaches. I don't look at it like that. I'm not looking at the next coach who comes in here. I'm trying to win a championship, whatever it is, I'm just trying to win."

Young, a two-time All-Star, is Atlanta's on-court team leader as the starting point guard while also ranking as the team's top scorer with 26.7 points per game. He dismissed speculation he had a rocky relationship with McMillan.

"There's a lot of moments that people really don't understand that me and him have had and that's OK," Young said after Friday morning's practice. "It will get brought up eventually. I know I don't tell everybody everything. I kind of let y'all make up rumors about certain things about how I am and how my relationship is with certain people. I just play basketball."

Young said he has talked with McMillan since the firing and added "It's not the last time he and I are going to talk."

Hawks general manager Landry Fields on Wednesday said speculation that McMillan was hampered by conflicts with Young were unfair to Young. Fields said McMillan's relationship with Young was not a factor in his decision to make a coaching change.

Fields said he already has launched his search for McMillan's full-time replacement and said former Utah coach Quin Snyder is a candidate.

Young said "I don't care to have any input" in the coaching search.

"I trust those guys up top," he said. "Since I've been here I've always said that. Nothing has changed for me."

Fields said he believed it was time for a new voice on the Hawks bench and said "there was slippage" as the team lost four of six games before the All-Star break.

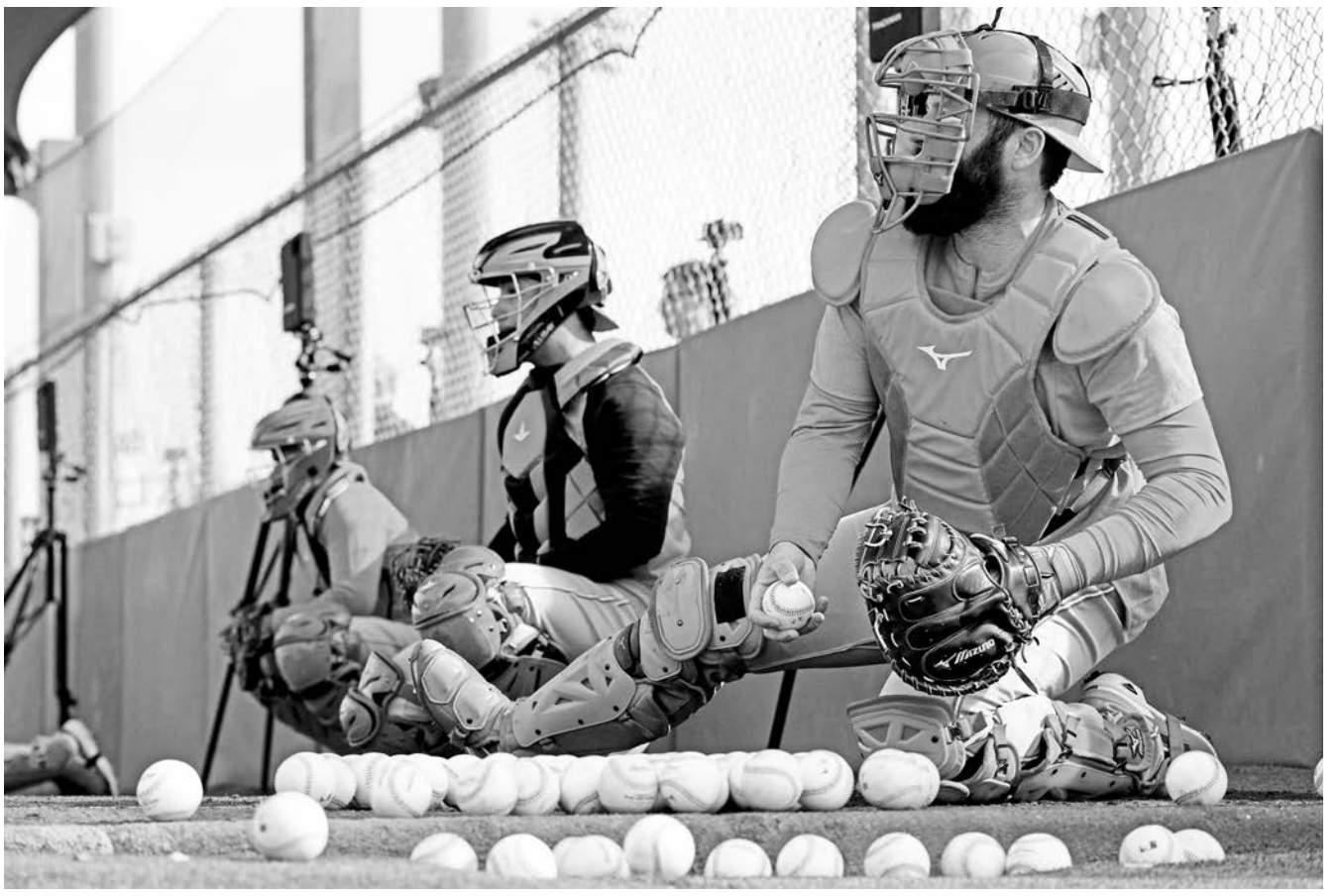
Asked if he believes it was time for a new voice, Young said "That's not up to me."

"I don't know. I think that's part of it. I think sometimes it's not always going to be easy. Some conversations are not going to go great. That's just part of it. Not every situation is easy and nice."

Young participated in Friday's practice and is expected to start in Friday night's game against Cleveland as the Hawks (29-30) hope for a late-season surge under interim coach Joe Prunty.

MLB catchers wary of looming robo umps amid rules changes

By TIM BOOTH
AP Sports Writer



AP

Cincinnati Reds catchers run drills during an MLB spring training baseball practice, Friday, Feb. 17, 2023, in Goodyear, Ariz.

Seattle Mariners manager Scott Servais spent parts of 11 seasons and nearly 800 games behind home plate as a catcher with four franchises, mostly in the 1990s.

During that era—one dominated by Hall of Famers Mike Piazza and Ivan Rodriguez—the skills needed at backstop were clearly defined.

"Could you throw guys out, how did you do blocking the ball and could you hit with power?" Servais said. "That's how the position was evaluated."

A generation later, those attributes have been joined by a more subtle but equally significant skill: pitch framing. During baseball's data revolution, the fine art of making borderline pitches look like strikes was found to be a game-changing craft—one that could be as impactful as Piazza's power or Rodriguez's arm.

The calculus, though, could be about to change, along with an equation that's included the human element for nearly 150 years.

While pitch clocks, bigger bases and other rules changes debut this year at the major league level, the Automated Ball-Strike System will receive its biggest experiment yet at Triple-A. ABS will be used four days per week to call every pitch at baseball's highest minor league level. On the other three days, umpires will traditionally call balls and strikes with a challenge system in place—teams will be able to appeal a handful of calls to the so-called robo-zone each game.

To many, ABS has begun to feel inevitable. Umpires have already agreed to allow it at the major league level when it is ready. Which means that within a season or two, everything around home plate could change.

"It's going to be here," Servais said.

Others think Major League Baseball, and specifically Commissioner Rob Manfred, don't recognize how seismically such a shift could alter the sport.

"I don't see it happening," said Yankees All-Star and distinguished pitch-framer Jose Trevino. "I don't think Manfred has any idea what's going on whenever he talks about that kind of stuff. He's obviously never put the gear on, so he doesn't know."

Manfred, who last summer told ESPN that ABS could reach the majors by 2024, has cautioned this spring that the robo-umps remain in "the evaluation phase." In order to be adopted in the big leagues, ABS would need to be approved by an 11-member competition committee that includes four players.

"There are issues that are still the topic of really considerable discussion within the ownership group and even more that are going to have to be resolved in the joint committee process with the players," Manfred said. "The framing issue is one of those. I mean it's a legitimate concern on the part of at least a subset of players."

The subset includes some coaches, too, including New York Yankees director of catching Tanner Swanson — a pioneer of sorts in teaching backstops to steal strikes.

An appreciation for pitch framing had been under way for nearly a decade when Swanson jumped from college coaching to join the Minnesota Twins organization before the start of the 2018 season.

Among his most impactful ideas: If catchers received pitches while down on one knee as opposed to a traditional squat, they'd be better positioned to steal strikes near the bottom of the zone. Within just a couple seasons, the one-knee approach he coached with Minnesota was being used across the majors.

"When I got into pro ball, I think it really kind of opened the curtain to like, 'OK, now this is not only extremely valuable, but this is something that we should be prioritizing just in terms of the frequency in which it happens relative to all the other skills.'" Swanson said.

Swanson preaches subtle movements with the glove on every borderline pitch — just enough trickery to sway even the most well trained umpire. Even if it came at the expense of blocking pitches or throwing out runners, the data showed framing trumped all other skills.

Swanson has had several notable success, starting with Mitch Garver in Minnesota and most recently Trevino, who was an All-Star and Gold Glove winner last season. Trevino converted 53.8% of non-swinging strikes on the edges of the zone into strikes — best in the majors, according to MLB's Statcast.

The knee-down catching technique is already being taught to youth catchers on up, and there's now an entire generation of big league catchers trained to put pitch presentation first.

"Framing's always been big," said Baltimore catcher Adley Rutschman, last year's AL Rookie of the Year runner-up. "Since probably my junior year in high school, it's been a big point of emphasis. Got to college, same thing, and in the pros, same thing."

Robot umpires, of course, can't be fooled. So what happens when framing falls out of focus?

One name comes to mind for Servais: Piazza.

"Mike was actually a pretty good receiver. But he could bang it, he could really hit and he just changed the position in my era," Servais said. "So there'll be more emphasis put on offense.

"Receiving won't matter at all. You'll see guys set up with guys on base in throwing position, their bodies will be halfway turned because it won't matter. So you'll teach the position differently."

Unless, of course, receiving does still matter.

"When you have two alternatives, some of those alternatives are better at addressing issues," Manfred said. "Obviously, the challenge one reduces dramatically the framing issue for catchers in terms of the value placed on framing. So you know, more to follow on that one, but I think it's a mistake to automatically assume that ABS is coming on any particular timeframe."

Regardless, Swanson believes one-knee down stances are likely here to stay because it takes stress off catchers' bodies and puts them in better position to block pitches, with their body already centered lower to the ground.

But the valuations and evaluations will change if framing's significance is lessened.

"I don't think it's good for the game at all," Trevino said. "There's guys out here that are good defensive catchers for a real long time. Guys that are still in the game that are defensive catchers. I think that takes away from the art of the catcher."

MLB's bigger bases could lead to more steals, fewer injuries

PEORIA, Ariz. (AP)—Like a violin virtuoso using a new music stand, San Diego Padres third baseman Manny Machado noticed a difference right away.

Not only are the bases bigger, but they feel different, too.

"It's definitely different, for sure," said Machado, a two-time Gold Glove winner. "They look better. I just got to kind of keep playing with it and stepping on it and kind of like getting the feel for it. But it's definitely different for sure."

The bigger bases—going from 15- to 18-inch squares—are part of a flurry of changes by Major League Baseball designed to put more action and athleticism back in the game and make it more appealing to a younger generation of potential fans.

When the new rules were adopted by baseball's 11-person competition committee in September, the four players on the panel supported the bigger bases and voted against the use of a pitch clock and limits on defensive shifts.

The new bases—"They look like a pizza box," Red Sox manager Alex Cora cracked—cut down the distance between the bases by 4 1/2 inches. The distance between third and home and home and first was trimmed by 3 inches.

It doesn't sound like much, but the impact could be considerable.

Instead of waiting around for a three-run homer, big league teams could try a more aggressive approach on the basepaths. Coupled with new limits on what MLB calls disengagements—pickoff attempts or steps off the rubber—it's more important than ever that pitchers are quick to the plate and strong-armed catchers stay alert with runners on.

"The run game, preventing the run game, is something that we've talked about, we're going to continue to talk about, because ... the stolen-base attempt should increase a good bit, I think," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said.

Major league teams finished with 2,486 steals in 3,297 attempts last year, up from 2,214 steals and 2,926 attempts in 2021, according to Sportradar, but much lower than 3,229 steals and 4,365 attempts a decade ago in 2012.

In testing in the minors, two Triple-A leagues used the bigger bases for half of the 2021 season. One experienced a 2.2% increase in successful steals, and the other posted 0.7% increase.

The 2012 season—when Mike Trout led the majors with 49 stolen bases—was the last time the big leagues surpassed 3,000 steals and 4,000 attempts.

"I've definitely been thrown out by less than (4 1/2) inches ... so maybe that starts factoring into results," said Chicago Cubs second baseman Nico Hoerner, who swiped a career-best 20 bases in 22 attempts last year.

Of course, it also gives the majors' top defensive first basemen an even better chance of keeping runners off base altogether.

"I think it could help. It'll give me another inch or so of reach on a throw that wants to pull me off the base," said Arizona Diamondbacks first baseman Christian Walker, who won his first Gold Glove last year.

Besides the activity on the basepaths, Major League Baseball is hoping the change will help reduce injuries. While testing the bigger bases in the minors, there was a 13% decline in what the league calls "injury events near the bases" from 2021 to 2022.

There's more room for first basemen to avoid getting stepped on, or to pull their arm away in time to avoid a batter hustling up the line. It also should help avoid collisions all over the diamond.

"When you walk on the field, you don't really notice it, and getting closer to the bag, you definitely do notice it," said Cubs first baseman Eric Hosmer, a four-time Gold Glove winner. "It seems like a little flatter, too, as well. Not only bigger and longer, but definitely a little flatter.

"But yeah, I think it's going to prevent some injuries, so I think anytime you can even knock that number down one or two guys, that's well worth it."

Tomodachi, Nakama, Lotus clinch playoff spots

Teams Tomodachi, Nakama, and Lotus are in the Roccball playoffs of 2023. Each team has the same 6-1 win-loss record. During the regular season of play at the Marianas High School Gymnasium, Tomodachi defeated Nakama, Lotus defeated Tomodachi, and Nakama defeated Lotus.

The team with the best offense for Roccball 2023 was Tomodachi. The team players of Tomodachi scored 320 points in seven games: Team Nakama scored 288 points and team Lotus scored 274 in their seven games of Roccball. Of the 320 points scored by Tomodachi, there were 48 3-point aces, four 2-point xunks, eight 2-point kees, and 17 3-point goals. In scoring statistics, Tomodachi had a 52% 1-point court scoring record and a 48% multiple points scoring record.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Round 7 of the the 2023 Roccball season unfolded last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Teams Nakama and Lotus will play a three-set game to determine which team advances to challenge Tomodachi for the 2023 Roccball championship. Tomodachi was the 2022 Roccball champion and will be defending their title against whoever wins the sudden death playoff game between Nakama and Lotus.

In the postseason Roccball games, teams will not be allowed to recruit new players or players from other teams. The team rosters of each team are frozen. Only the players registered for Tomodachi, Nakama, and Lotus at the end of the seventh round will be allowed to compete in the playoffs. The Roccball playoff game and the best-of-three games for Roccball champion games will be held at the MHS Gym. The starting time will be at 11:30am. ***(PR)***

UMANGS

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ed Elementary School Basketball League 2022-2023 last December.

But with a little pressure from his friends, he joined the volleyball team and from there, learned the basics and helped the team through their undefeated season.

Daniel said that the final game against the Kingfishers was "easy and it's my first time playing volleyball." Teammate Napu Pangelinan, who also plays soccer, added that "it feels good to be first place."

The Umangs were undefeated in the regular season with six wins and brought their streak into the championship tournament.

Their journey to the finals started off with a win against William S. Reyes 1. They then met and won against KES in the quarterfinals, then beat Garapan Elementary School 1 for the upper hand in the final face off against KES later on.

LEIGH GASES

Kagman Elementary School Kingfishers finished second place in the 2022-2023 Co-ed Elementary Grass Volleyball Tournament after the finals against Koblerville Elementary School Umangs 1 at the Oleai Sports Complex last Saturday morning.

Mendiola said that despite being undefeated throughout the season, their toughest competition was against WSR 1 as they went into overtime against them. He attributed it to the team's nerves on the first day of the championship tournament which began on Friday, but that they regained their composure long enough to get the W.

Mendiola then thanked Public School System Athletic Program director Nick Gross, "for setting up this wonderful event for the kids to enjoy, parents, teachers, and the community coming here to support the players—it's a wonderful thing."

Gross after the finals said, "it was a fantastic season played over four or five weeks that we've done Friday nights under the lights… It's a great future for volleyball in the CNMI. We had a total of 20 teams representing 13 schools from all three islands for a total of 230 students in the 12-and-under range."

LEIGH GASES

Logan Daniel, a 5th grade student, led the Koblerville Elementary School Umangs 1 in the 2022-2023 Co-ed Elementary Grass Volleyball Championships against the Kagman High School Kingfishers with back-to-back aces last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

He added, "that's just a testament of the community getting behind what we're doing and making sure that our kids have access to these really important sporting programs. I applaud the CNMI for coming out and supporting it. It was a great tournament with Kobler pulling it off undefeated throughout the tournament. Congratulations to them and their coaching staff. I think nobody necessarily saw Kagman coming up and getting second place, so congratulations to the Blue Marlins. Seeing the emotions of sport is a lot of what we do it for. There were so many tears here that you couldn't tell sometimes if they were happy or if they were defeated, but this is really that social-emotional learning that we speak of in the Public School System. I think this is really a good way to encompass it," said Gross.

LADY

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Lady Dolphins' outrigger team rushed through the finish flag first place once again with a time of 6:41.140. The Mantas' second place time was 6:53.110, while the Ayuyus time was 7:43.050.

The Lady Dolphins are on top of the girls division leaderboard with 39 points; the Lady Mantas are second with 33 points; and the Lady Ayuyus are third with 9.

In the boys division races, the Mantas swept all the prelims and finals for both 500m and 1,000m races with a time way ahead of the other two teams.

The Mantas cruised into first place in the 500m race with a time of 2:45.790, followed by the Dolphins' 2:48.390, and the Ayuyus time of 2:58.740.

The Mantas muscled their way through the 1,000m finals as well, being the only team to come in under 6 minutes at 5:54.570. The Dolphins came in second at 6:11.860 and the Ayuyus came in third at 6:19.960.

With a perfect 45 points, the Mantas are undefeated and lead the boys division. The Dolphins are second with 25 points and third are the Ayuyus with 11.

In the mixed races, both Mantas' teams were the team to beat as the combined forces of the speedy boys and the teamwork with the girls brought them first place in both the 500m and the 1,000m events.

Paddling into first place of the 500m event were the Mantas at 2:57.010; second place were the Ayuyus with a time of 3:15.320; and last were the Dolphins with a time of 3:18.130.

In the 1,000m race, the Mantas held onto first place with a time of 6:12.630; the Ayuyus clocked in second at 6:38.780; and the Dolphins came in last with a time of 6:42.090.

The mixed division is led by the Mantas' 40 points, followed by the Ayuyus' 18 points, and last is the Dolphins' 14.

The championships have been moved up to this Saturday, March 4, as many paddlers are competing in the annual Chamorro & Carolinian Language Heritage Studies (CCLHS) Competition in Guam from March 13 to 14.

Last season's champions of the women and co-ed divisions were the Ayuyus, while the Manta Rays won the perpetual championship trophy in the boys division.

NMIBF

From Page 20

the national team. It was a difficult task and it still is because trying to change the 'culture' mindset on what it takes to represent such as training year round and also being a role model by being involved in community service was not an easy ask of commitment from our athletes."

Despite that challenge, Lee and the NMIBF board felt this was important to establish in order for the CNMI to be competitive when going to off-island competitions.

As for plans for the new year, Lee said NMIBF will continue to grow grassroots programs like the Mini Basketball Village Outreach Program or BOLA, Basketball for Goods, and Interscholastic Leagues, just to name a few, in 2023.

"We will continue on with our national programs as well, both the juniors and seniors, and will have them ready for the 2023 Micronesian Games as well as other offshore competition that might arise," he said.

On behalf of NMIBF, Lee said he would like to thank all the federation's supporters, namely FIBA Oceania, the Tan Siu Lin Foundation/Tan Holdings, IT&E, Marpac, the CNMI Public School System, and all the companies on the island that had donated to assist our federations.

"Special thanks also to our volunteer coaches for their time and effort, our athletes for their commitment, and my board members for their hard work," he said.

Morant, Grizzlies beat Nuggets in matchup of West leaders

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Sports

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Umangs 1 are No. 1 in grass v-ball

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

LEIGH GASES

Koblerville Elementary School Umangs 1 are the 2022-2023 Co-ed Elementary School Grass Volleyball champions after defeating the Kagman Elementary School Kingfishers at the Oleai Sports Complex last Saturday morning.

Koblerville Elementary School Umangs 1 are No. 1 after an undefeated campaign in the 2022-2023 Co-ed Elementary Volleyball Championships last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

The Umangs met Kagman Elementary School in the winner-take-all finals and defeated the Kingfishers, 21-5.

In the beginning, the Kingfishers came into it with a steady momentum—landing 5 points early on. However, once the Umang's 5th grader and multi-athlete Logan Daniel got a hold of the ball, it was smooth sailing from there as about 10 successive aces to game point etched the Umangs' names onto the perpetual plaque.

With Daniel on the team are Iku Benavente, Ice Diopulos, Eric Palacios Jr., Tiwsormal Taisakan, Napu Pangelinan, Kaylee Lizama, Reneelynn Aguilto, Zowie Deleon Guerrero, Hanisha Taitano, Sapalyn Apas, and Nnart Siech.

Coach and teacher Francis Mendiola said that all the credit goes to the players. "It was a good tournament. I give the players all the credit for that. Us coaches just prepared them and it was up to them to take it in. If they're happy, the coaches are happy."

Mendiola said that Daniel is actually not a volleyball player, but a basketball player who also led the Umangs' basketball team to a championship in the IT&E Interscholastic Co-

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NMIBF says still a lot more work to be done

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Lee

Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation president James Lee is not about to pat himself on the back for reviving the sport of basketball on the islands and admits they're still far from accomplishing their goals.

"NMIBF has accomplished a lot over the past years and have definitely come a long way in terms of being active with various programs to bring basketball back on active mode. However, there is still a lot more work to be done," he said.

For one, Lee said NMIBF is still behind in working with local basketball clubs in terms of giving them guidance with their administration as well as providing them training support with coaching and other programs that might apply to their club to help them grow.

He said NMIBF hopes to tackle that this year.

Asked what is NMIBF's biggest accomplishments this year, Lee said hands down it would be the national program for both the juniors and seniors and having them compete in the FIBA Micronesian Cup and U15 Oceania Championship last year.

"The goal for the national program was to create a standard for our basketball athletes when representing our home and being part of

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Lady Dolphins, Mantas continue va'a dominance

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

LEIGH GASES

Marianas High School Lady Dolphins outrigger team is seen in a file photo during their 500m race last Feb. 11 at the Kilili Beach in Susupe. They lead the girls division with 39 points heading into the championships this Saturday, March 4.

LEIGH GASES

The Saipan Southern High School Manta Rays are seen in a file photo during their 500m race last Feb. 11 at the Kilili Beach in Susupe. They lead the boys division with a perfect 45 points heading into the championships this Saturday, March 4.

The Marianas High School Lady Dolphins and the Saipan Southern High School Manta Rays outrigger team continue to control the waters off Kilili Beach in Susupe after topping their respective divisions of the co-ed high school Public School System Interscholastic Outrigger Canoe Race 2022-2023 last Saturday.

The Lady Dolphins lead the girls division as they were one with their paddle and the water—besting the finals of both the 500m and the 1,000m races for 15 points due to a second place finish in the 500m prelims, while in the boys division, the Mantas are hinting at a title defense in the upcoming championships next Saturday as they dominated both events and garnered a perfect 20 points.

The Lady Dolphins quickly made like a Dolphin as they navigated their second home—the open waters, with a time of 3:06.400 in the 500m sprint finals garnering the full 5 points. SSHS came a close second at 3:09.460, followed by Kagman High School's 3:31.590.

In the longer 1,000m sprint finals, the six-some of the

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